NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL
OF INDIA UNIVERSITY

BENGALURU

धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः

Please remember that this resource is meant for many other users like you, so do not tamper, tear or damage.

We believe that it is an individual responsibility to care for library documents and other resources of institution.

Please do check before you borrow, because you have to compensate if the material is returned in a damaged condition.

SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF INDIAN NATIONALISM

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Indian Feudal States and National Liberation Struggle
Gandhi's Truth & Non-violence X'Rayed
Recent Trends in Indian Nationalism
Rural India in Transition
Rural Sociology in India
Essays on Modernisation of Underdeveloped Societies (2 Vols.) (Ed.)
Slums and Urbanization (with S. Devadas Pillai)
A Profile of an Indian Slum (with S. Devadas Pillai)
State and Society in India
A Positive Programme for Indian Revolution (Ed.)
Peasant Struggles in India
Urban Family and Family Planning in India
India's Path of Development
Violation of Democratic Right in India

SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF INDIAN NATIONALISM

A. R. DESAI

BOMBAY
POPULAR PRAKASHAN

POPULAR PRAKASHAN PRIVATE LTD
35C, Tardeo Road, Popular Press Bldg., Bombay 400 034

320.54
DES

© by A. R. Desai

First published 1948
Fifth edition 1976
***Reprinted* 1981, 1982, 1984, 1986**
Reprint, 1987

ISBN 0 86132 086 7

Purchased M.P.P. House
~~Approval~~
~~Gratis~~
Acc. No. 0038
Price Rs. 50/-
National Law School of
India University Lib
Central College C
Bangalore-560

(3187)

PRINTED IN INDIA

by Ram Printograph (India), C-114, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase I, New Delhi 110 020 and published by Ramdas G. Bhatkal for Popular Prakashan Private Limited, 35-C, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya Marg, Popular Press Bldg., Tardeo, Bombay 400 034.

TO
THE MEMORY OF
MY GRANDFATHER

A man with 'tougher intelligence,
especially a humorous intelligence
and one that had long suffered
the slings and arrows of
outrageous fortune'
who revealed to me
the glory of reason,
the richness of humanism
and the ecstasy of existence.

PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION

Social Background of Indian Nationalism is being published in its fifth edition as a popular paperback. By now it has been translated into Gujarati, Malayalam and Hindi languages and the Indian Council of Historical Research has undertaken to translate it in rest of the regional languages in India.

For me it is deeply satisfying to find that this study is becoming more and more popular, useful and is acclaimed by Scholars as one of the few books which provide a synthetic, multi-sided account of the structural transformation that took place in India under the impact of the British Rule in India. Further, I feel a sense of fulfilment because this book is being recognised as necessary reading, as a reference work or a textbook for graduate, post-graduate and auxiliary courses in many universities and research centres in India as also in other countries.

The circumstances under which the study emerged have been detailed in prefaces to earlier editions.

I will indicate, what according to me, are the few distinctive features of the work which have enabled the book to be placed in the category of authentic and reliable studies of social transformation that took place in Indian society during the British Rule.

I

Indian society experienced a qualitative structural transformation during British Rule, which led it on a new and different path of development. British Rule initiated some of the basic changes in social physiognomy of Indian society, though to subserve its own interest. It generated new currents in the economic processes, though as a colony of British capitalism. It inaugurated new principles of political rule, established different criteria of sovereignty, different norms for governance and administrative bureaucratic set-up. British Rule dealt a fatal blow to the peculiar feudal framework which provided the matrix for the Indian society for a millennium. It generated forces which directly or indirectly gave a mortal blow to the very root of the peculiar stratificatory system known as Caste system and created basis for the emergence of new social classes, strata and associations and thereby laid the foundation for modern class system. During British period, Indian society experienced the introduction and growth of new and modern means of transport, communication, and educational system. It should be recognised and remembered that all these changes were taking place to suit the needs of various phases of British capitalism and to subserve the basic interests of British capitalism. However, it should not be forgotten as Marx pithily pointed out that British Rule, though indeed for its selfish interest, unconsciously inaugurated a qualitative structural transformation which hitched the Indian society to a new path. For Indian society, there was no going back after freedom. Either it had to reshape itself as capitalist or socialist society.

As a reaction to the new web of politico-economic and socio-cultural relations which were being created by British policies, various movements—religious, intellectual, social, cultural, economic and political—emerged in India. The quality, functions, forms and techniques of these movements were different and new compared to those movements which Indian society experienced during pre-British period. The endeavours made by various classes and strata to alter the situation created by the British Rule and to assimilate or challenge its good or evil effects manifested themselves into complex movements which created a new exciting, interesting, heroic and unique history for Indian people. The reactions and movements being basically against the British Rule, manifested themselves into a national movement and a national awakening. We can easily characterise the Indian national movement as an aspiration and movement of various sections of Indian people to counteract the evil effects of the British Rule, to secure political freedom from British tutelage and to reshape Indian society on the basis of progress and prosperity. The content of this aspiration was different for diverse classes. These varied contents manifested in various types of movements. Whether the Independent India would make real progress on capitalist path or socialist path was another dream.

National movement during British period was not a small, insignificant phenomenon. It had epic dimension. It enveloped the striving and struggles for transformation of one-fifth of humanity.

The present work attempts to sketch an outline of this episode. It is the conviction of this author that a proper scientific appraisal of the social background of this titanic event viz. national movement can alone provide adequate perspective to comprehend the changes that are taking place after Independence and assist the progressive forces to channelise them on progressive lines.

Such an endeavour to discern the social transformation of Indian society is the first distinctive feature of the present work. There are a number of studies which strive to unlock the transformation of one segment or other of Indian society. There are also some studies which attempt to disclose the changes that took place in Indian society say in early nineteenth, late nineteenth or first, second, third or fourth decades of twentieth century during British period. There is, however, not a single work excepting R. P. Dutt's *India To-day*, and Jawaharlal Nehru's *Discovery of India*, which tries to portray the overall transformation that took place in India during the entire British period. The present work, to the satisfaction of the author, is a contribution of this type, which I think is the cause of its widespread acceptance.

II

The second distinguishing feature of this book is the specific sociological approach adopted in the study. The entire study is developed on the explicit assumption of applying Historical Materialism or Materialist Conception of History. This approach is now proving its immense effectiveness to understand Indian social reality. This is slowly being proved by the works of Prof. Kosambi, Prof. R. S. Sharma, Prof. Irfan Habib, Prof. Chhana, Prof. Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya and others.

The present study was also one of the few earlier studies undertaken with a conscious desire to apply this method to understand the social transformation that took place in Indian society during British period. The delineation of the transformation of Indian society on the basis of application of this method in its major outline is being recognised as fairly authentic and superior to any other delineation based on other approaches. It is satisfying to the author, that the sketch of Indian structural transformation drawn on the basis of application of Historical Materialist method is being found more and more authentic, and is proving more fruitful as a starting point to deepen the understanding of Indian reality. The present work stands as an evidence of immense power inherent in Historical Materialism as a method of understanding social reality.

This explicit methodological basis of inquiry is another distinctive feature of the present work. It has also given a glimpse of titanic potentiality of this method for adequate and fruitful understanding of Indian society.

Another distinctive feature of the present work lies in the type of deductions drawn and some of the propositions made on the basis of analysis of social background of Indian nationalism.

Some propositions pertain to the nature of future trends about Indian development on the basis of studies of Indian national movement. Some pertain to diverse and complicated currents in Indian national movement, about the nature and types of leadership and the pattern of programmes and techniques of struggles adopted by them, and the problems which emerged as a consequence in Indian society after the withdrawal of British Rule.

It was explicitly stated in the work, which was written before the Independence, that for removing poverty, illiteracy and insecurity of job for mass of Indian people, and to develop the immense resources of the country and unfettered development of productive forces in the country, two essential prerequisites would be needed viz. (1) End of British Rule and political freedom, (2) Power in Independent India, not in the hands of capitalist class but in the hands of working class. Similarly, it was stated that after Independence for proper development of Indian society, the economic axis of Indian society, should be socialist and not capitalist.

India secured Independence on the basis of bargaining with British Rulers by Indian leadership and that too on the basis of vivisection of India on communal lines. The power came in the hands of capitalist class and the economic axis created was capitalist based on mixed-economic indicative planning. The post-war development of last twenty-five years has proved convincingly that this path cannot solve any of the basic problems of the people. This was stated almost categorically in the book written before Independence.

The value of the work has been proved by the fact that the major propositions arrived at by understanding the major structural changes in Indian society, on the basis of Historical Materialist method stand vindicated by subsequent unfoldment of Indian social development. I am happy to state that the subsequent studies made by me about the post-war developments in India, on the basis of applying Historical Materialist Method of analysis, have been found to be very valuable for understanding and predicting the trends of development in India and are proving useful to those who are striving to organize movements to end capitalism and usher in socialist social order in India.

I am thankful to the Publishers and the National Book Trust, India, for pricing this paperback edition within the reach of the students.

A. R. DESAI

Jaikutir,
Taikalwadi Road,
Bombay-400 016
5th October 1976

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

THE AUTHOR feels glad to write a preface to the fourth edition of Social Background of Indian Nationalism. Social Background of Indian Nationalism, as indicated in the preface to the first edition, is an effort to give a composite picture of the complex and variegated process of the rise of Indian nationalism and its various manifestations. Its scope of inquiry is limited to a period beginning with the advent of Britishers till the beginning of the Second World War. The studies of nationalism in India during the war and post-war periods have been published in my complimentary work *Recent Trends in Indian Nationalism*. The two volumes provide, to the best of my knowledge, a continuous story of this fascinating phenomena in India. They also prove, at least to the author, the fruitfulness of studying the transformation that is taking place in Indian society during the last two centuries, by applying the method of Historical Materialism. It is indeed very heartening to learn that the Social Background of Indian Nationalism is still warmly received in various parts of the world and needs fourth edition.

I once again express my deep sense of gratefulness to Dr. G. S. Ghurye who initiated me in this study and gave me affectionate and valuable guidance in exploring such a complex subject. I am also thankful to the University of Bombay for publishing its first edition in its Sociology Series.

I warmly thank my young friend Uday Mehta, Research Assistant, for his assistance in getting this book through along with the preparation of Index.

To Shri Ramdas Bhatkal and his team of associates attached to Popular Prakashan, I extend my sense of gratitude for bringing out this edition in its elegant form. I am sure the book and its complimentary volume will continue to provoke discussion.

Deparment of Sociology
University of Bombay
Bombay

March, 1966

A. R. DESAI

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

THE AUTHOR feels happy to write a preface to the third edition of "Social Background of Indian Nationalism."

As pointed out in the preface to the second edition, the World War II and Post-war periods have been momentous and crucial in the history of Indian Nationalism. Nay, they are cyclonic in their effects on a global scale. History during these periods has been moving with a hurricane tempo, though not arbitrarily or capriciously.

My publishers pressed me to add a short postscript to indicate these war and post-war trends of Indian Nationalism. I tried to evolve a short postscript. However, due to the complexity and richness of data, it emerged into a separate study and is being published simultaneously as an independent book *Recent Trends in Indian Nationalism*.

It is indeed satisfying to learn that *Social Background of Indian Nationalism* is being warmly received in various parts of the world.

I again express my deep sense of gratefulness to Dr. G. S. Ghurye, under whose affectionate and valuable guidance the present study emerged.

I am thankful to the University of Bombay for publishing its first edition in its Sociology Series.

A. R. DESAI

Department of Sociology
University of Bombay
Bombay 1
November 1959

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE FIRST edition of Social Background of Indian Nationalism appeared in the University of Bombay Publications, Sociology Series, under the General Editorship of Dr. G. S. Ghurye, Professor and Head of the Department of Sociology, in 1948. It received an appreciative evaluation from a large number of reviewers of different shades of social and political opinion. This study is an attempt to give an all-sided and inter-connected account of the rise of Nationalism in India which is a very significant phenomenon in the evolution of modern India.

More than a decade has passed since this work was undertaken. This period has witnessed momentous and cyclonic events both in India and in the world. Mighty transformations have taken place. Numerous implicit developments have suddenly become explicit. The physiognomy of human society on a global scale has undergone very rapid and qualitative changes. India, too, has experienced far-reaching changes under the impact of internal and international social forces. Decades of slow development are being compressed into years of rapid transformation.

The main object of the work was to trace the social background of Nationalism in India. A mere postscript added to this study in the second edition would have been hardly adequate to cover the momentous happenings of the decade. I thought a separate volume treating the recent developments as a sequel to the present volume would alone serve the purpose.

The scope of the enquiry is, therefore, not extended beyond the period that was covered in the first edition. I hope to examine the social background of Nationalism in India in recent years in another study.

The second edition is, however, reprinted with the following changes:—

1. Elimination of repetition of ideas which crept in the first edition.

2. Elimination of incongruity of tense, which occurred due to the fact that British rule existed in India when the script for the first edition was prepared.

3. Making certain ideas explicit, which remained vague in the earlier edition.

4. Addition of sub-titles to aid the study of the book.

I again express my deep sense of gratefulness to Dr. G. S. Ghurye under whose affectionate and very valuable guidance the present study emerged.

I am also thankful to the University of Bombay for publishing its first edition in its Sociology Series.

A. R. Desai

Department of Sociology
University of Bombay
Bombay

August, 1954

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE TRANSFORMATION of Indian society from a medieval to a modern basis during the last one hundred and fifty years and the resultant rise of Indian nationalism and the nationalist movement in its various forms, social, religious, economic, political and cultural, constitute a most fascinating theme for study for the students of social sciences and Indian history. This mighty movement of almost one-fifth of the human race has not only something of the grand and the dramatic in it, but has also a vital significance for the future of humanity. The theme was enchanting and I was drawn to it.

Further, during my limited association with the student, working class, kisan and political nationalist movements in my student days, I reached the conclusion that intelligent comprehension of, and fruitful participation in these movements required, as an indispensable prerequisite, a concrete and comprehensive understanding of the structural transformation of Indian society during the British period, of the emergence and role of new social forces, and of the socio-genetic causes of the rise of Indian nationalism and the nationalist movement. The nature of the new social forces and the law of development of Indian society had to be grasped. This accentuated my desire to make a special study of the subject.

So far, to my knowledge, there is no single published work which gives a historical, synthetic and systematic account of the genesis of Indian nationalism, or a portrayal and evaluation of specific weights and mutual interactions of a multitude of the new socio-historical forces which gave rise to national consciousness. The present work, which emerged out of the thesis submitted for the Ph.D. degree of the Bombay University, is an attempt towards contributing to the fulfilment of this need. I have tried to use the method of historical materialism in the treatment of the subject, for locating and assessing the specific weight of different social forces which evolved and formed the social background for the emergence and development of Indian nationalism.

I am deeply grateful to Dr. G. S. Ghurye, Professor and ead of the Department of Sociology, Bombay University, nder whose affectionate and very valuable guidance I preared the thesis.

This is an attempt to give a composite picture of the comlex and variegated process of the rise of Indian nationalism nd its various manifestations. The author is himself fully onscious of its many limitations. However, he will consider is labour fully rewarded if the book stimulates interest in the ubject and provokes further work based on richer data and ore specific conclusions.

ombay A. R. DESAI

pril, 1946

CONTENTS

PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION vii
PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION xii
PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION xiii
PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION xiv
PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION xvi

PROLOGUE 1

Nationalism, A Historical Phenomenon—Nation, E. H. Carr's Definition—Development of Nationalism in Various Countries—National Sentiment, Dominant Sentiment To-Day—Nationalism, Special Field of Research To-Day—Study of Rise and Growth of Indian Nationalism.

I. ECONOMY AND CULTURE IN PRE-BRITISH INDIA 7

Self-Sufficient Village Community—Indian Feudalism Vs. European Feudalism—Nature of Village Economy in Pre-British India—Nature of Urban Economy in Pre-British India—Nature of Village Culture in Pre-British India—Nature of Urban Culture in Pre-British India—Religio-Ideological Unity of Indian Culture—Absence of National Sentiment.

II. BRITISH CONQUEST OF INDIA 30

Transformation of Indian Society, A Product of British Conquest—British Conquest, Its Causes—British Conquest, Its Peculiar Features—Its Far-Reaching Effects on Economic Structure of India—Historically Progressive Significance.

III. TRANSFORMATION OF INDIAN AGRICULTURE UNDER BRITISH RULE 37

Indian Feudalism, Its Basic Features—Introduction of Private Property in Land—New Land Revenue System—Commercialization of Agriculture—Breakdown of Traditional Indian Village.

IV. SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF TRANSFORMATION OF INDIAN AGRICULTURE

Emergence of National Agriculture—Growth of Sub-division and Fragmentation of Land—Effects of Fragmentation—New Land Revenue System—Commercialization of Agriculture—Growth of Poverty—Growth of Rural Indebtedness—Transfer of Land From Cultivating to Non-Cultivating Owners—Rise of Serfdom—Growing Polarization of Classes in Agrarian Areas—Rise of Agrarian Proletariat—Rise of Parasitic Land-Owning Class—Colonial Character of Indian Agriculture—Reconstruction of Agriculture, Its Pre-Requisites.

V. DECLINE OF TOWN HANDICRAFTS 79

Effect of British Rule on town Handicrafts—Disappearance of States, Patrons of Town Handicrafts—Disappearance of States, Patrons of Town Handicrafts—Foreign Rule, Its Disastrous Effects on Town Handicrafts—Reasons for their Ruination—Decline of Indian Town Handicrafts—Historical Significance of Decline.

VI. DECLINE OF VILLAGE ARTISAN INDUSTRIES 92

Pre-British Village Artisan Industries—Causes of their Decline—Their Decline, an Uneven Process—Surviving Village Artisans, their Changed Status—Abortive Attempts at their Reconstruction—Decline of Village Industries, Its Consequences.

VII. RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN INDIAN INDUSTRIES 102

Development of Modern Industries in India—Brief History of their Development—Emergence of Trusts and Monopolies—Dominance of Finance Capital—British Capital, Its Stranglehold on Indian Economy—Reasons for the Lop-Sided Growth of Indian Industries—Indian Monopolies, their Peculiarities—Pre-Requisites of Healthy Industrial Development—Bombay Plan, Its Limitations—Social Significance of Indian Industrial Development.

VIII. MODERN MEANS OF TRANSPORT AND RISE OF INDIAN NATIONALISM 126

Transport in Pre-British India—Introduction of Modern Means of Transport—Their Lop-sided Development—Railways, their Progressive Significance—Prerequisites for their Sound Development.

IX. THE ROLE OF MODERN EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIAN NATIONALISM 135

Education, Its Social Significance—Pre-British Indian Culture, Two misconceptions—Education in Pre-British India—Introduction of Modern Education—Unhealthy Reactions to Modern Education—Growth of Modern Education, Upto 1854—From Wood's Dispatch to Lord Curzon's University Act—Third Phase, Upto 1921—Fourth Phase, 1921-1939—Modern Education in India, Main Criticisms—Its Progressive Essence—Indian Nationalism, No Offspring of Modern Education—Modern Education, Its Advantages—Prerequisites of its Healthy Development.

X. POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE UNIFICATION OF INDIA UNDER BRITISH RULE 166

Absence of Basic Political and Administrative Unity in Pre-British India—Legal Unification—Administrative Unification—Establishment of Uniform Currency System—Unification, Its Chief Defects.

XI. RISE OF NEW SOCIAL CLASSES IN INDIA 174

Emergence of New Social Classes—New Social Classes—Forces Leading to their Emergence—Surviving Old Classes, their Changed Position——Zemindars, their Interests and Organizations—Tenants: Their Interests and Organizations—Peasant Proprietors: Their Sub-Divisions, Interests and Organizations—Indian Kisans, their Principal Movements—Kisans, their Specific Psychological and other Traits—Rise of Modern Indian Intelligentsia—Modern Indian Bourgeosie: Its

Interests, Organizations and Movements—Rise of Modern Indian Proletariat—Modern Proletariat, Its Distinguishing Characteristics—Growth of Working Class Movements—New Social Classes, National in Character—their Consciousness of Common Interests—Uneven Development of their Consciousness—Growing Reactionary Trends in Propertied Classes—Twofold Movements in India.

XII. THE ROLE OF THE PRESS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN NATIONALISM 221

Press, Its Decisive Social Role—Its Absence in Pre-British India—Growth of Indian Press, Upto 1900 A.D.—Its Subsequent Development—Indian Press, Its Broad Political Trends—Its Slow and Meagre Growth, Reasons—Repressive Measures Against Press, their History—Sir Jenkins on Press Act of 1910—Press Acts of 1931 and 1932, their Significance—Three News Agencies—Indian Press, Its Progressive Role.

XIII. SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS REFORM MOVEMENTS AS THE EXPRESSION OF NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC AWAKENING 240

Reform Movements, Expression of Rising Nationalism—their Democratic Yearnings.

XIV. CRUSADE AGAINST CASTE SYSTEM 243

Caste System, 'Steel Frame of Hinduism'—Castes Vs. Classes—Caste System, Its Chief Features—Growing Disintegration of Caste System, Causes—Impact of New Property Relations—Impact of Modern Cities—Impact of New Legal System—Impact of New Social Formations—Impact of Class Struggles—Impact of Modern Education—Impact of Political Movements—Caste System, Its Reactionary Significance—Movements Against Caste System—Movements Perpetuating Caste System—Dual Aspects of Lower Castes' Movements—Future Trend.

XV. CRUSADE AGAINST UNTOUCHABILITY 263

Untouchability, Inhuman Institution of Hindu Society—Depressed Classes, their Strength—Movements to Ameliorate their Conditions—"Neutrality" Policy of Britain, Its Criticism—Impact of New Economic Forces—Impact of Modern Education—Impact of Nationalist Movement—Prerequisites of Abolishing Untouchability.

XVI. MOVEMENT FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN 273

Woman, her low position in pre-British India—New Economic Forces, their Impact on her Status—Movements to elevate their Status—Struggles for Right to Education—Women's Participation in Politics—their Participation in Class Struggles.

XVII. RELIGIOUS REFORM MOVEMENTS AMONG HINDUS AND MUSLIMS 281

Religious Reform Movement, Expression of National Awakening—"Appeal to Past", Its Real Significance—Medievalism Vs. Liberalism—Religio-Reform Movement, Its All-Embracing Scope—Similar Developments in Europe—Brahmo Samaj Movement—Prarthana Samaj—Arya Samaj—Ramakrishna Mission Movement—Theosophy——Religious Reforms by Eminent Political Leaders—Materialism, Its Near-Absence in India—Early Religio-Reform Movements, their Progressive Significance—Growth of Rationalism and Materialism—National Awakening Among Muslims, Reasons for its Slower Growth—Ahmadiya Movement—Aligarh Movement—Sir Mahmud Iqbal—Other Muslim Reform Movements—Religio-Reform Movements, their Reactionary Role in Subsequent Period.

XVIII. RISE OF POLITICAL MOVEMENTS AS THE EXPRESSION OF INDIAN NATIONALISM 307

Political Nationalism, Outcome of Foreign Domination—First Sproutings—Revolt of 1857, Its Causes—Character and Significance of the Revolt—New

Strategy of British Rule—Its Consequences—Principal Events Between 1857 and 1885—Disastrous Famines and Peasant Uprisings—Ilbert Bill—Growing Discontent and New Leadership—Hume's Feeling for "Safety Valve"—Founding of Indian National Congress—Liberal Leadership, Its Principles and Methods—Its Progressive Role—Unfulfilled Demands—Growing Disillusionment—Emergence of Militant Nationalist Leadership—"Swadeshi and Boycott"—Jawaharlal Nehru on Militant Nationalism—Militant Nationalists, their Chief Activities—Congress Split in 1907—Morley-Minto Reforms and After—Rise of Terrorist and Revolutionary Movements—Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms—Jallianwalla Bagh Tragedy—Epoch of Gandhi and Gandhism—N. C. O. Movement—Withdrawal of N. C. O. Movement, Its Results—Formation of Swaraj Party—Growth of Communal Tensions—Growth of Socialist and Communist Ideas—from Boycott of Simon Commission to Lahore Congress—Complete Independence, Declared Objective—Civil Disobedience Movement—Gandhi-Irwin Pact—Revival of C. D. Movement—Lessons of C. D. Movement—Limitations of Gandhi and Gandhism—Rise of Radical Organizations—Congress Ministries in Provinces—Rift Between Gandhi and Subhas Bose.

XIX. PROBLEM OF NATIONALITIES AND MINORITIES 381

Problem of Nationalities and Minorities in India—Genetic Causes of Rise of Nationalities—Nation and National Minority, their Differences—Indian Nationalist Movement, Its Peculiarities—Awakening of Dormant Nationalities—Two Contradictory Tendencies at Work—Indian Muslims, A National Minority—Communalism Among Muslims, Reasons—Late Awakening Among Them, Reasons—Sir Syed Ahmed and Muslim Awakening—Muslim League, Its Communal and Upper Class Character—British Strategy of "Communities, Classes and Interests"—Its Criticism—Growing Militancy Among Muslims After 1912—Khilafat and Hijrat Movements—Communalism, Its Real Essence—Fourteen Points of Jinnah—Jinnah's Criticism of Congress Governments—Muslim League Demands Pakistan—Other Muslim Organizations—History of Idea of Pakistan—Views of Various Parties and Leaders on Pakistan—Leaders of Indian National Congress—Congress Socialist Party—Indian Liberals—Hindu Mahasabha—Dr. Ambedkar—Communist Party of India—Problem of Nationalities, Prerequisites of its Progressive Solution.

EPILOGUE 432

Nationalism in India, Its Chief Phases—First Phase—Second Phase—Third Phase—Fourth Phase—Fifth Phase—Perspective.

BIBLIOGRAPHY 443

INDEX 453

REFERENCES

THE references in the footnotes are to authors and page numbers only. The books to which the notes refer are listed in the Bibliography on page 443.

Where more than one book by the same author is referred to, the page reference is preceded by a bracketed number indicating the sequence in which the titles appear under the author's name in the Bibliography.

SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF INDIAN NATIONALISM

PROLOGUE

Nationalism, A Historical Phenomenon

LIKE ALL social phenomena, nationalism is a historical category. It emerged in the social world at a certain stage of evolution of the life of the community when certain socio-historical conditions, both objective and subjective, matured. As E. H. Carr remarks, ' "nations", in the modern sense of the word, did not emerge until the close of the Middle Ages'.[1]

Before national communities, national societies, national states, and national cultures came into existence, communities in various parts of the world *generally* lived through tribal, slave, and feudal phases of social existence. At a certain stage of social, economic, and cultural development, nations came into being. They were generally distinguished from non-national communities of previous periods of social existence by certain specific characteristics such as an organic welding of the members of the nation, living in a distinct territory within a single economy, so that they felt conscious of common economic existence; generally one common language used by them; and further, a similar psychological structure among its members and a common culture evolved by it. Though an ideal nation possessing all these traits in a state of fullest development remained an abstraction (since the elements of the past always survived, in varying degrees, in the economy, social structure, psychological habits, and culture, of any nation), still, from the sixteenth century onward, national communities, in different stages of national consolidation, have appeared in the amphitheatre of human history.

Nation: E. H. Carr's Definition

Regarding the traits which distinguish a nation from a non-national community, E. H. Carr remarks as follows:

> 'The term nation has been used to denote a human group with the following characteristics:
>
> (a) The idea of a common government whether as a reality in the present or past, or as an aspiration of the future

(b) A certain size and closeness of contact between all its individual members.

(c) A more or less defined territory.

(d) Certain characteristics (of which the most frequent is language) clearly distinguishing the nation from other nations and non-national groups.

(e) Certain interests common to the individual members.

(f) A certain degree of common feeling or will, associated with a picture of the nation in the minds of the individual members"[2]

Development of Nationalism in Various Countries

The integration of communities into nations was a prolonged historical process. The nascent nation had to struggle against various obstacles which barred its growth. For instance, in England it had to struggle against the feudal state which strove to perpetuate the feudal economy which kept the people economically disunited and thwarted the free growth of trade and manufacture, the prime levers of the economic consolidation of the people. The nascent nation had to struggle against the authority of the Roman Church which hallowed the feudal social and state structure in England, a structure based on the social and economic disunity of the British people. The nascent nation struggled against the Roman Church and established a national Protestant Church of England. The English people, further, through a series of political struggles, reformist as well as revolutionary, replaced the feudal state by a nation state. This state became their weapon to further consolidate their national social life, economy, and culture[3]

The English people were among the first to be welded into a nation. As a result of a number of historical reasons, nationalism was born in England earlier than in a number of other countries. For example, the early growth of trade and manufacture which enveloped the people more and more in a network of exchange relations, paved the way for the growth of a national economy. It also led to the early emergence of democratic and nationalist ideas which attacked feudal conceptions of state, society, and the status and position of the individual.

In course of time, historical conditions for the rise of nationalism matured in other countries also. This was the result of the development of internal forces as well as the impact, on these countries, of outside forces.

The development of nationalism in different countries followed lines determined by its respective social and cultural history, the extant political, economic, and social structures, and the specific character of the psychological and economic traits of the social classes which were the vanguard of the struggle for a national social existence in those countries. Every nation was thus born and forged in a unique way.

The history of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is primarily the history of the formation of nations in enlarging zones of the human world, of the struggles of nascent nations seeking to be full-fledged nations against internal and external obstacles, and of the struggles of already formed nations, among themselves, for self-preservation or self-aggrandizement. The process of nation formation has continued during the twentieth century also when the awakened peoples of Asiatic and African continents, such as the Indians, the Chinese, the Turks, the Arabs and the Egyptians, organized movements to remove indigenous feudal or foreign imperialist obstacles in the way of their full development as free nations. These movements have expressed their yearnings for a free and unobstructed development of economic and cultural life on a national basis. Even in Europe, at the end of the First World War (1914-18), a number of national groups like the Magyars, the Hungarians, the Czechs, and others, who lived in a state of subjection under the multinational Austro-Hungarian Empire, organized struggles to shake off that subjection.[4]

That the human world is now mainly composed of nations, and is a conglomeration of these nations, was recognized when at the end of the First World War a League of Nations was formed to maintain peace in the world and even after the Second World War, the United Nations Organization was organized. The nation is recognized as the dominant form of community prevailing in the present epoch. In fact, the principle of nationalism has primarily governed various schemes of political and other reconstruction evolved by modern sociologists, statesmen, and politicians with a view to eliminating discord from the social world and creating a premise for the free and full expression of the creative power of human groups. Even the Soviet Union, which revised its economy from a capitalist to a historically higher socialist basis, has recognized the national principle inasmuch as it is a union of national republics. The dream even of the most daring Marxist regarding the future human society on a world scale in the next stage has taken the form of a world federation or union of socialist nations.

National Sentiment, Dominant Sentiment Today

The nation is thus the prime fact of the present epoch and the national sentiment, the dominant emotion of man. Contemporary movements in the spheres of economy, politics, or culture (barring the field of such, objective sciences as natural sciences and technology) are inspired by conscious national motives and urges, irrespective of whether they are organized to defend and develop the freedom and culture of respective nations or to mitigate or suppress the freedom or culture of other nations. The nation remains, also, a unit in all contemporary programmes of world reconstruction which seek to integrate humanity, on a capitalist or socialist basis.

Nationalism, Special Field of Research Today

Due to this decisive significance of the role of nationalism in the life of humanity, some of the most acute and eminent thinkers of the world have, in recent years, made nationalism a special subject of study and investigation. They have attempted to study and solve problems concerning nationalism such as what constitutes a nation, under what socio-historical conditions the nation came into existence, what role nationalism plays in human progress, and what its relation with internationalism or the urge of men to integrate on a world scale is. Further, they have tried to study the various expressions of nationalism in diverse fields such as social, economic, political, and cultural. Finally, some of them have also investigated the history of the rise and development of nationalism in separate countries and attempted to lay bare the genetic causes of this rise and growth in each individual country. In fact, the literature on nationalism produced in recent years represents an attempt to unveil the complex and multifold process of the formation of nations, their traits, struggles, and modes of self-expression and self-assertion. Since nationalism emerged in its own unique way in each separate country, the study of nationalism in each country became a separate task.

Study of Rise and Growth of Indian Nationalism

Indian nationalism is a modern phenomenon. It came into being during the British period as a result of the action and inter-action of numerous subjective and objective forces and factors which developed within the Indian society under the conditions of the British rule and the impact of world forces.

The study of the rise and growth of Indian nationalism, is of great significance from the standpoint of a general study of nationalism. The process of the growth of Indian nationalism has been very complex and many-sided. This is due to a number of reasons. Pre-British Indian society had a social structure quite unique and perhaps without a parallel in history. It sharply differed in its economic base from the pre-capitalist medieval societies of European countries. Further, India was a vast country inhabited by a huge population, speaking many languages and professing different religions. Socially, the Hindus, comprising two-thirds of the population were almost atomized in various castes and sub-castes, a phenomenon peculiar to the Hindu society. Again, Hinduism itself was not a homogeneous religion but a conglomeration of religious cults which divided the Hindu people into a number of sects. This extreme social and religious division of the Hindus in particular and the Indians in general presented a peculiar background to the growth of nationalism in India. Nationalism in other countries did not rise amidst such peculiarly powerful traditions and institutions. India's peculiar social, economic and political structure and religious history, together with its territorial vastness and a teeming population, make the study of the rise and growth of Indian nationalism more difficult, but more interesting and useful also. The self-preservative will of the past social, economic and cultural structure was stronger in India than in perhaps any country in the world. Further, the significance of the Indian nationalist movement for the present and future history of humanity is also great since it is the movement, increasingly becoming dynamic, of an appreciable section of the human race.

Another very striking thing about Indian nationalism is that it emerged under conditions of political subjection of the Indian people by the British. The advanced British nation, for its own purpose, radically changed the economic structure of the Indian society, established a centralized state, and introduced modern education, modern means of communications, and other institutions. This resulted in the growth of new social classes and the unleashing of new social forces unique in themselves.[5] These social forces by their very nature came into conflict with British Imperialism and became the basis of and provided motive power for the rise and development of Indian nationalism.

Thus, Indian nationalism has grown and is developing in a complex and peculiar social background.

This work is an attempt to assess and evaluate the role of numerous elements comprising this social background and to portray the process of the rise of nationalism therefrom.

References

1 Carr, p. 7.
2 Ibid, p. xx.
3 Refer Weisbord, Laski.
4 Refer Macartney, Hans Kohn, Stalin.
5 Refer Weisbord, Carr.

CHAPTER I

ECONOMY AND CULTURE IN PRE-BRITISH INDIA

THE HISTORY of the rise of national sentiment in India is closely bound up with the growth of a unified national economy. This unification took place as a result of the destruction of former pre-capitalist forms of production prevailing in India and the substitution, in their place, of the modern capitalist economic forms. We shall study, concretely and in detail, the whole process of this economic transformation in its various stages, which was brought about by the impact of the British conquest of India.

We shall first make a brief survey of the basic features of the economic system obtaining in pre-British India.

Self-Sufficient Village Community

A self-sufficient village, based on agriculture carried on with the primitive plough and bullock-power and handicrafts by means of simple instruments, was a basic feature of pre-British Indian society.

The self-sufficient village as the basic economic unit had existed for centuries in India and, except for some minor modifications, had survived till the advent of the British rule, in spite of all political convulsions, religious upheavals and devastating wars. It stood impregnable in face of all foreign invasions, dynastic changes, all violent territorial shiftings in inter-state struggles. Kingdoms rose and collapsed but the self-sufficient village survived. 'The village communities are little republics having nearly everything that they want within themselves, and almost independent of any foreign relations. They seem to last within themselves where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down; revolution succeeds revolution; Hindu, Pathan, Mogul, Maratha, Sikh, English, are all masters in turn; but the village communities remain the same.'[1]

The village population was mainly composed of peasants. The village committee, representing the village community which was the *de facto* owner of the village land, distributed this land among the peasant families in the form of holdings. Each holding was cultivated by the peasant family by means of the collective labour of its members and with the aid of the primitive plough and bullocks. The peasant family enjoyed a traditional hereditary right to possess and cultivate its holding from generation to generation.

Regarding the mutual relations of these families, Shelvankar remarks: 'They were subject to various collective restrictions and entitled to various collectively managed services. The "municipal" services, watch and ward, etc., the enjoyment of rights in common grazing grounds and woodlands, the necessary co-operation for purposes of arranging irrigation and water supply, etc., the organization of defence against marauders as well as to protect the land and crops from wild animals, pests and stray cattle—all these urgent and necessary conditions of village life imposed on the peasantry a regime of co-operation that was a bar to the growth of sharply antagonistic or irreconcilable private claims. Above all, there was the ever present necessity of meeting, collectively as a rule, the revenue-rent demands of the overlord of the village, whether he was the ruler in his own right or only an intermediary.'[2]

Indian Feudalism Vs. European Feudalism

Indian feudalism was distinguished from European feudalism by the fact that, under it, no private property in land existed. 'In the Hindu period, the land belonged to the village community, and was never regarded as the property of the king.'[3] The king or his intermediary claimed only a part of the produce of the land, a claim which was met by the village committee as the representative of the village community. 'The state had merely a right to a share always paid in kind. Under the Moslems, the existing tenures and tax system were adopted with some modifications.'[4]

Since neither the king, nor the intermediaries (such as zemindars or tax-gatherers; jagirdars or nobles on whom the king, out of favour, conferred the right to collect revenue from a specified territory and retain a part or whole of it; or religious, charitable and educational institutions endowed by the prince with a similar right) were owners of the land, all conflicts which took place among rulers, or between them and the intermediaries or the village community, were only over the magnitude of the share of the village produce. Conforming to the traditional concept and practice, neither the king nor the intermediary expropriated the village community of the possession and control of the village land and established their property rights over it or concerned themselves with the methods of cultivation.

In fact, 'None of the major struggles in Indian history had for its object the exercise of rights within the village, but the exercise of rights over the village. They were conflicts between overlords of various grades for the right or power to get a payment from the peasant, not to seize his land. European history, on the contrary, reveals a conflict between the peasantry and the manorial lords because the latter not only demanded a share of the produce, but desired to retain a particular method of cultivation—by forced labour—or to introduce new methods of cultivation (enclosures, large-scale farming). The Indian conflict was one between lords who were concerned not at all with methods of cultivation, but to draw an income from the peasantry... The issue was always between different claimants of the sword, the village and the peasantry remaining throughout the passive subject of conflict, the booty over which the rival powers fought each other.'[5]

Nature of Village Economy in Pre-British India

The structure of agricultural production in the Indian village thus remained uninterfered with for centuries. No emperor or his viceroy ever challenged the ultimate customary right over the village land by the village community.

Further, village agriculture produced for the needs of the village and, excepting a share of this produce which the village had to surrender to the lord of the moment—may be the *subah* of the Delhi Emperor, or the *sardar* of the Poona Peshwa

—the entire produce was almost locally consumed by the peasant and non-peasant village population.

Besides the peasant families, the village population also included industrial workers—such as a smith, a carpenter, a potter, a weaver, a cobbler, a washerman, an oilman, a barber, and others. They all worked almost exclusively for satisfying the needs of the village population.

Further, the village community generally also included within it 'a class of menials who did the work of scavenging, the outcastes, most of whom were the descendants of the aboriginal population of the country, who were absorbed in the Hindu society of these early days, instead of being exterminated.'[6]

All exchange of products produced by the village workers, agricultural or industrial, was limited to the village community and hence very restricted in scope. The village population consumed almost the whole of what it produced.[7]

Regarding the nature of the exchange of village products, Shelvankar comments:

> 'It is, however, not strictly accurate to say that there was exchange between individuals. For, while the peasants individually went to the artisans as and when they needed his services, the payment he received in return was not calculated on the basis of each job nor was it offered him by each customer (or client) separately. This obligation was borne by the village as a whole, which discharged it by permanently assigning to the craftsman a piece of land belonging to the community and/or the gift of a fixed measure of grain at harvest time. Thus the other party to the exchange was the collective organization of the village as much as the individual peasant, and the artisan was not merely a private producer but a sort of public servant employed by the rural community.'[8]

Thus not only did the village not have any appreciable exchange relations with the outside world, but also within itself, the phenomenon of a market was absent. Gadgil remarks: 'The mere fact of the isolation of the village is not striking in itself, nor was the fact that all the artisans lived in the village peculiar. But the peculiar feature of the Indian village was that the majority of the artisans were servants of the village.'[9]

Another feature of the village economic life was the low stage of the division of labour based on insufficient differentiation of agriculture and industry. While principally attending to agriculture, the farmer family also engaged itself in domestic spinning. Similarly, the artisan who was often given a plot of village land by the village committee carried on agricultural activity for some time in the year.

The village artisans secured locally the raw materials, such as wood, clay and hide, required for their crafts. Wood was available from the forest area in the periphery of the village. The carcasses of dead animals of the village provided the cobbler with hides. Cotton grew in almost every part of the country. Iron, however, had sometimes to be imported from outside. On the whole, the village was almost self-sufficient regarding the raw materials needed for the village artisan industry.

Thus, economically, the village was predominantly autarchic. Local produce prepared mainly by means of local labour and resources was almost locally consumed. There was very little exchange between the village and the outside world. Whatever little trade existed, was carried on, generally, on a specific day of the week, at the market in a big village where a variety of goods from a number of centres was sold.

> 'To complete the self-sufficiency of the village it usually happened that even the raw materials were close at hand. Wood growing within the village area could be used for buildings and impelments. Cotton was available in many parts of the country. Most of the goods produced were consumed in the village; and the surplus could be disposed of in the village fairs, held once a week. The handworkers derived their skill through the heritage of centuries. Their respective occupations had a religious sanction behind them.'[10]

The technique of village agriculture and industry was on a low level. 'Simple agricultural equipment and the hand-manipulated tools for manufacture were all that were known. Even wind-mills and water-wheels were seldom employed. The sickle and plough, the saw and chisel, the spinning-wheel and pit-loom, were made of a trifling amount of material in a very short time, but sometimes gave service for generations.'[11]

The village population lived for centuries an almost unvarying economic life based on self-sufficient village agriculture and industry carried on by means of this feeble technique. The autarchic village, almost completely independent of the outside world and with the resultant absence of any appreciable social exchange, remained for centuries an invulnerable stronghold of the same stationary, stereotyped social existence. 'The only break was an occasional catastrophe, an invasion from the land-hungry hordes behind the mountains, or the disturbance caused by drought. . . .'[12]

Karl Marx vividly and picturesquely described this never-changing type of social organism in the following words:

> 'These small and extremely ancient Indian communities . . . are based on possession in common of the land, on the blending of agriculture and handicrafts, and on an unalterable division of labour . . . each forms a compact whole producing all it requires. The chief part of the products is destined for direct use by the community itself, and does not take the form of a commodity. Hence production here is independent of that division of labour brought about, in Indian society as a whole, by means of the exchange of commodities. It is the surplus alone, that becomes a commodity and a portion of even that, not until it has reached the hands of the state, into whose hands, from times immemorial, a certain quantity of those products has found its way in the shape of rent in kind. The constitution of these communities varies in different parts of India. In those of the simplest form, the land is tilled in common, and the produce divided among the members. At the same time, spinning and weaving are carried on in each family as subsidiary industries. Side by side . . . we find the "chief inhabitant", who is judge, police and tax-gatherer in one; the book-keeper who keeps the account of the tillage; . . . another official who prosecutes criminals, protects strangers travelling through, and escorts them to the next village; the boundary man who guards the boundaries against neighbouring communities; the water-overseer who distributes the water from the common tanks for irrigation; the Brahmin who conducts the religious services; the schoolmaster who on the sand teaches the children reading and writing; the calendar Brahmin, or astrologer, who makes known the lucky and unlucky days for seed-time and harvest; a smith and a carpenter who make and repair all agricultural implements; the potter, who makes all the pottery of the village; the barber, the washerman, the silver-smith; here and there the poet who in some communities replaces the silver-smith, in others the schoolmaster. This dozen of individuals is maintained at the expense of the whole community. If the population increases, a new community is founded, on the pattern of the old one, on unoccupied land. . . . The law that regulates the division of labour in the community acts with the irresistible authority of a law of Nature. . . . The simplicity of the organization of production in these self-sufficing communities that constantly reproduce themselves in the same form, and when accidentally destroyed, spring up again on the spot and with the same name—this simplicity supplies the key to the secret of the unchangeableness of Asiatic societies, an unchangeableness in such striking contrast with the constant dissolution and refounding of Asiatic states, and the never-ceasing changes of dynasty. The structure of the economic elements of society remains untouched by the storm-clouds

of the political sky.'[13]

Another characteristic of the village community was that caste, rigidly, almost with the inexorable force of a natural law, determined the occupation of its members. Since castes were based on the principle of heredity, occupations also became hereditary.

Since the economic life was constrained and exchange almost limited to the village, there was no necessity for travelling, except on a marriage occasion or a pilgrimage once in many years. There was, therefore, no stimulus for the development of means of transport. The bullock-cart was the chief means of transport in pre-British India.

About the social and other aspects of life of the village community, O'Malley remarks:

> 'The chief social institutions, as they existed in their integrity, were not individualist but collectivist. The unit was not the individual but the family which regulated the relations of its members *inter se*. The inter-relations of different families were governed by the village community and the caste, the former of which was a collection of families organized for the purposes of communal self-government, while the latter was an aggregation of families united by rules as to marriage, diet, occupation and intercourse with the rest of the community, but not localized like the village community. All three, the family, the caste, and the village community, maintained ideological control over the individual who was bound to conform to their standards. The individual scarcely existed except as a member of a group. Self-determination was only possible within the limits which the latter imposed. . . . The village community was only partially a social institution. It was more an economic and administrative organization, over which the state had right of control though this was sparingly exercised. The affairs of the caste and the family, however, were matters with which the state had no direct concern. The relations of their members were governed not by secular law but by Hindu law and customary regulations.'[14]

Pre-British Indian society almost completely subordinated the individual to the caste, the family and the village panchayat, throughout its centuries-old existence. 'Even at the end of the eighteenth century, the Indian social order was, for the most part, equivalent to the discharge of obligations to the family, to the caste and the village panchayats working on the basis of an economic self-sufficiency in the rural units, and in addition, to the guilds and corporations on the basis of trade and commerce between urban areas.'[15]

Nature of Urban Economy in Pre-British India

Amidst an ocean of tiny, autarchic villages, a few towns had sprung up and existed. These towns were of three kinds. those of political importance, those of religious significance and others of commercial value.[16]

Towns of political importance were capitals of kingdoms and empires. They were seats of governments, headquarters of princes or emperors with their courts of noblemen and satellites, army chiefs and state officials of various grades. They were also chief cantonments since the bulk of the army was stationed in capitals. Here also gathered as auxiliaries such social groups as musicians, sculptors, painters, poets, courtesans, and dancing girls, who catered to the healthy or unhealthy physical or artistic needs and whims of the rulers and the nobility.

There was another group of towns like Benares, Mathura, Puri, Nasik and others which were centres of religious worship and places of pilgrimage. A fixed population, which attended to the requirements of thousands of pilgrims who visited these towns, dwelt there.

Then there were towns which had commercial importance because they were situated on sea coasts or on the banks of navigable rivers or at the confluence of strategic trade routes.

Handicraft industries, complex and diversified, flourished in these towns. As Calverton writes:

> 'The industries of India, far more advanced than those of the West, were the product of clever brains, fine abilities, creative genius. To begin with, they constructed in those early centuries, when Occidental navigation was still in an undeveloped stage, ships of "a thousand and a thousand and two hundred behares burden". . . .
>
> In Hindustan the manufacture of textiles was the leading industry, and the goods produced which included diverse cloths, cotton, and silks, were internationally admired and craved. In addition, thirteenth,-fourteenth-and fifteenth-century Hindustan had metalwork, stonework, sugar, indigo, and paper industries. In other parts of India, woodwork, pottery, and leather industries flourished. . . . Dyeing was the leading industry in many parts of India, and, in a number of centres, gold threadwork and different forms of embroidery were developed to a high point of perfection. . . .
>
> Lead and mercury mines, combined with a few iron mines, constituted another industry of importance. The manufacture of glass, by methods which were the most ingenious of the time, was one of the

best developed industries. Many travellers commented on the excellent quality of the iron manufactured. and concerning the chemical industries there is not a single word of disapprobation that can be discovered. Porcelain, too, as in Cathay, was a conspicuous product. Hindustan's ivory was sought after by all the nations. Out of it were made bracelets, rings, dice, bedsteads, beads, and a score of other things which enchanted the eyes of Europe. Great skill was shown in many different industries in work on precious stones.'[17]

In contrast to the artisan industry which had to supply the limited needs of a small village group, it was the urban industry which produced luxury articles for the aristocratic and wealthy merchant strata of the society; which produced equipment for the army, forged weapons of war and undertook the construction of military forts; which erected magnificent palaces, imposing temples and even such monuments of rare art or engineering as the world-celebrated Taj Mahal and Kutub Minar. It was the urban industry which undertook to construct canals.

The town handicrafts of India, during centuries of their existence in pre-British India, had reached a high level of development. The fame of their products, which were varied and of great artistic quality, had spread to distant countries. The Indian industries, consequently, commanded a world market. V. F. Calverton remarks: '. . . from ancient days, when Indian fabrics, tapestries, gems, carpets, enamels and mosaics adorned the private and public buildings of Rome, down to the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, the world looked to India for its most arresting and exciting wares.'[18]

The urban industries which met the varied needs of diverse groups can be broadly divided into three categories. There was the first group of industries of a luxury or semi-luxury type which produced luxury articles for the aristocratic and wealthy strata of society, Indian as well as foreign. These industries constituted the predominant part of the total urban industry. Then there was a group of industries which satisfied the requirements of the state and other public institutions. Finally, there were industries which 'included the iron-smelters . . . the salpetre worker, the bangle maker. . . . They were mostly localized industries, carried on in some parts of India.'[19]

The urban industrial workers were broadly divided into two groups, those who worked independently, and those who were employed by the state and other corporations or private individuals on the basis of wages.

Handicraftsmen, who were not wage workers but independent producers, owned the tools and raw materials necessary for production, worked in their own places and brought finished products to the anonymous market. This was in contrast to those urban workers who worked on the wage basis since the latter were provided with raw materials by their employers, were mobilized in places of work fixed by them and produced for these specific employers and not for the market.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the urban industries was the extremely limited character of their market. This was due to the fact that they did not produce articles of daily use for the common people but functioned to meet the specific needs of the social strata and institutions mentioned above. Further, the requirements of the vast mass of the population living in autarchic villages were met by the local artisan industry of the villages themselves, thereby narrowing down the market of urban industries to extremely restricted zones.

Though there existed in pre-British India some of the pre-requisites for a capitals transformation of Indian economy and social structure, these prerequisites could not mature so as to lead to such a transformation. The non-development of bourgeois society on the basis of the growth of indigenous social forces, namely commercial capital and uraban industry, was due to the extremely peculiar political and economic structure of pre-British Indian society. Among the obstacles to such consummation, the self-sufficient village was perhaps the most formidable.

> 'Owing to the direct combination of domestic industry and agriculture that it (the village community) represented, and the resultant economies, the village was able to preserve its equilibrium and offer the strongest resistance to disruptive influences.'[20]
>
> The village which had in general no room for serfdom or baronial exploitation, was the more firmly articulated in its inner structure and therefore succeeded where the manor had failed, in maintaining its distinctive character. When we consider that, in the nineteenth century, it withstood the assault of mass-produced goods—and broke down finally under the cumulative pressure of political and economic changes, we cannot be surprised at the tenacity it displayed for so long.'[21]

The industrial and mercantile classes of the towns, due to the almost impregnable balanced economic of the self-sufficient village, could not bring the countryside within the orbit of any appreciable trading operation. This not only restricted the growth of industry and trade in pre-British India but also made the classes economically and hence politically dependent upon and servile to the feudal prince and his nobility. They could not economically conquer the countryside and mobilize the support of the rural population against Indian feudalism and seize power.

There was, according to Shelvankar, a second reason too why the incipient Indian bourgeoisie could not overthrow the feudal regime and establish a dominant capitalist economic system in India.

> 'For the agrarian system of India, public works and irrigation works were a necessity It could only be met by an organization with the resources and the authority of the state. And to control, regulate and supervise public works and the collection of the land tax, the state was compelled to station its agents at the various local centres, which were the towns.'[22]

And further, 'in Indian conditions, . . . the state, whose fortunes were bound up with the land, never relaxed its hold on the towns which were the bases of its action'.[23] ???

These were, perhaps, the principal reasons which explain why the Indian bourgeoisie did not reach high levels of political and economic strength and capitalism did not grow as a dominant economic system in India. 'For these reasons—the invincible toughness of the village and the political impotence of the bourgeoisie—the evolution of Indian economy was inhibited and the spontaneous emergence of a capitalist order was rendered impossible'.[24]

It was the advanced bourgeoisie of England who, in fact, subsequently expropriated the Indian feudal princes of political power, established its own political domination over the country and accomplished a far-reaching capitalist transformation of Indian economy, both rural and urban, 'the only genuine social revolution in Indian history' as described by Marx. ?

Nature of Village Culture in Pre-British India

We will now take a survey of the social and cultural condition of the Indian people in pre-British India.

For centuries, the mind of the overwhelming portion of the Indian people distributed in numerous and autarchic village centres, each village being a closed system with very little social, economic or intellectual exchange with the outside world, remained cramped, did not grow.[25] The almost complete absence of any appreciably developed economic exchange between the village and the outside world, together with the very weak means of transport which did not grow beyond the bullock-cart, isolated the village population, reducing it to a single small unit mainly living its life exclusively in the village. A country fair, a pilgrimage or a marriage were the only occasions when the villager left his village and that too for a brief period.

Within the village, the economic life based on primitive agriculture and artisan industry was on a low and almost stationary level. For ages, the same primitive plough driven by the bullock, added to the elementary instruments of the artisan, constituted the sole productive forces of the village humanity. The productivity of labour being low as a result of this low level of technique of production, there hardly survived for the mass of people either surplus of products (after satisfying the needs of self-preservation and the land-revenue claims of the often rapacious government) or time for organizing a high standard of material and cultural life.

The scientific knowledge of the village people was as meagre as their technique of material production was feeble. This, in conjunction with the facts that no vital economic exchange existed between the village and the world beyond, and that the means of communications were ineffectual, explains why the village always lived a precarious existence. A catastrophic flood or a failure of crops threatened the village with extinction since, due to the very weak contact with the outside world and feeble means of transport, assistance could not be secured from the outside world.

Such precarious economic existence, such helplessness before natural catastrophes and such a state of insecurity, were bound to develop the outlook of the village population on lines of superstition, religious mysticism and the crudest forms of worship of natural forces. A feeling of defeatism and frustration dominated their outlook.

The caste-stratified social organization of the village population was also not conducive to any development of individual initiative, adventure or striking out of new paths. The villager considered the caste system as divinely ordained, docilely submitted to all its bans and taboos and passively accepted whatever status and function the 'God created' caste system assigned to him in the social and economic structure of the village life. Effectively inoculated with religio-mystical explanations, the villager could hardly feel an urge to investigate independently into that structure and the ideology which sustained it. In fact, his isolated social existence in the village, the frequent frustration of his efforts by forces of nature such as floods or droughts, reinforced by the grip of the caste system and of the authoritarian joint-family and by the religio-mystical philosophy drummed into his mind from childhood, smothered the mental initiative, the experimenting impulse, the investigating urge and the rebellious mood of the villager for ages.

The village population thus continued to live for centuries, the same sterile, superstitious, narrow, stereotyped social and intellectual existence. Almost the same group of superstitions, the same pantheon of deities, the same narrow village and caste consciousness, the same local perspective not transcending the limited miserable village existence, held in their grip the Indian humanity almost wholly concentrated in those autonomous, self-sufficient, self-absorbed villages, which were so many citadels of economic stagnation, social reaction and cultural blindness.

Even when the greater part of India was brought under a single political and administrative rule by an outstanding monarch like Samudra Gupta or Akbar, this in no way affected the essential life-processes of the autonomous village. It left intact and undisturbed or only slightly modified the essential life of the village. The only change due to such an imperial event, so far as the village was concerned, was that the land revenue was now transferred from the old to the new monarch. The village continued to remain economically self-sufficient. The villager continued to be governed by the caste and village committees and codes. The same intellectual stagnation and mental stultification of the people, growing out of the low level of socio-economic existence in the village, per-

Nature of Urban Culture in Pre-British India

While the economic and cultural life of the autarchic village was poor, almost stationary, stereotyped and scarcely transcending the perimeter of the village, that of the town was, in sharp contrast, mobile, rich, relatively progressive and in constant contact with the outside world. The towns were the seats of government, headquarters of the monarch and the court, or commercial centres in live economic contact with other towns and, frequently, even with other countries, or focal points of religious rallies, of constant visits of pilgrims. The town economy was more developed and differentiated since it had to cater to the highly complex and manifold needs of such social strata as the king and his nobility, wealthy merchants and exalted ecclesiastical dignitaries. A good proportion of the land revenue appropriated by the state from the village was spent in towns. The mercantile community consumed its profits in towns. All this gave a fillip to the economy of the town, determined its production and brought into existence such industries as the manufacture of superior types of cotton and silk cloth, artistic metal and marble-ware, luxury articles of all varieties demanded by fastidious aristocratic and merchant classes, and weapons of war.

By far the greater portion of the wealth of the kingdom gravitated to towns and was spent there. Thus there was relatively a prosperous economic life in urban centres.

Again, in towns were concentrated classes which appropriated a big share of the wealth of the country. These wealthy sections, the king, the nobility and the merchants, had a surplus of wealth to maintain artists, philosophers, poets, painters, musicians, sculptors, architects, builders who could erect marvellous monuments, engineers who could construct magnificent palaces, astronomers and other categories of scientists, physicians, etc.

Thus, it was in towns, in contrast to the poor, restricted, stultifying life of the village, that a highly developed cultural and economic life flourished. In fact, it was in towns that great philosophic and artistic movements grew and got nourishment. The aristocratic and wealthy merchant classes were always the patrons of these movements.

Again, there was also a great and constant movement of men in and from these towns for military, political, trading or cultural reasons. People came to town not only from other Indian towns but from other countries with which India had been developing and extending contact for ages, as envoys of friendly states, travellers, merchants, philosophers, artists or even propagators of other faiths.(The town did not live an exclusive existence. There was generally economic and cultural exchange between one town and other Indian towns, nay even the distant countries.)

(All the scientific, philosophic, artistic, and religio-artistic culture of the period was concentrated in towns) While superstition and the crudest forms of nature and god-worship were rampant in the village, most subtle, complex, and logically most elaborate kinds of idealistic and spiritualistic philosophies thrived among the enlightened section of the townspeople. The monarchs, Hindu, Buddhist or Muslim, maintained at their courts, under royal patronage, a galaxy of artists, literateurs, philosophers, and scientists who were the best representatives of, and epitomised, the entire culture of the period in its various aspects. The royal patron sat in the court surrounded by these savants and artists, who are celebrated in Indian history as 'Nava Ratnas' ('Nine Jewels').

At the courts of Ashoka, Vikramaditya, Bhoj and other Buddhist and Hindu kings as also at the courts of Akbar, Shah Jahan and other Mogul emperors, the outstanding artists, scientists, and thinkers of the respective period congregated. Kalidas, Bana, and other luminaries of artistic Hindu literature, flourished at royal courts. Tansen, the best musician of medieval India and founder of new tendencies in music, was patronized by Akbar. Astronomers were encouraged and supported by kings who built for them observatories as king Jayasing did. Whatever history has come down to us, recording the events of those ages, was written by court historians maintained by the ruling kings.

Indian culture, both Hindu and Muslim, was primarily and fundamentally religious. The religious note generally permeated all the intellectual and artistic creation of both Hindus and Muslims. As O'Malley remarks:

> "The most distinctive feature of Hindu culture was the religious element by which it was suffused. Religion was interwoven with the

Hindu system of law. The books in which it was incorporated were regarded as divinely inspired. ... Religion and literature were so closely associated that the greater part of the works composed in different Indian languages are devotional in character. ... Art again, which reflects the aesthetic sensibility of a people, was intimately connected with religion, architecture finding expression in temples, and sculpture in the carvings, instinct with religious symbolism which adorned them.'[26]

The same was true of the Muslim culture which too was mainly and essentially religious in nature and tone. Even when, as a result of the prolonged and close association of the Hindus and the Muslims, a strong tendency towards a synthesis of the two cultures grew, the essential religious character of the two cultures marked their cultural synthesis.

Religio-Ideological Unity of Indian Culture

The culture (philosophical, religious and other) of the pre-British Indian feudal-agrarian society was predominantly mystical in character. This was due to the fact that the society was economically on a low level, stationary and socially rigid. Whatever changes occurred within it were of a quantitative and not a qualitative character. Basically it remained the same for centuries. Such a social material existence inevitably bred a predominantly mystical world outlook. This mystical outlook determined the character and content of most of its creation in the philosophical, artistic and social-organizational spheres.

'By and large. Indian society was a "closed" one, if it was not static. Naturally, when it remained so over a long period, it developed, in P. Sorokin's language, the "ideational" traits of culture with more or less defined views on the nature of needs and ends and the means of their satisfaction, i.e. of social activity, with specific aesthetic, moral, social values and systems, and with certain common notions of Truth, Knowledge, Self and the Ultimate Reality. In other words, the Hindu, the Buddhist and the Muslim had together evolved a **Weltanschauung** in which the fact of Being was of lasting significance with all that it meant in the way of indifference to the transient and the sensate and of pre-occupation with the processes in which self was subordinated to and ultimately dissolved in the Ultimate Reality. Practically, for the individual, it meant that the proper observance of customs and rituals released him for the control of his inner life. For the society, it connoted a hierarchy in which those values alone were permanent which led to spiritual realization .... and those persons alone were leaders

> whose supreme attainment, if not the only engament in life, was spiritual culture. This world view is usually called mystical. Before the impact of Western commerce, it was the ruling view in India.'[27]

Both Hindu and Muslim cultures, religious in spirit, prospered in towns and under the patronage of kings, nobles and wealthy merchants.

The great Hindu temples in numerous Hindu centres of religious worship, such as Benares, Puri, Madura, Nasik, Mathura, and Somanath Patan, were constructed by Hindu monarchs, aristocrats, or rich traders. Vastupal and Tejpal, two wealthy Jain merchants, built at Delvada a group of Jain temples which for their beauty and architectural fines are among the most remarkable structure of all time. The famous pillars constructed by Ashoka, on which were inscribed ethical doctrines which formed the quintessence of Buddhism and which are scattered all over India, bear witness to the great art which flourished during that period under royal patronage.

In fact, there is not a town in India where we do not see a temple embodying the religious zeal and artistic talent of bygone ages.

The Muslim monarchs were not less distinguished for their patronage of art and culture. The grand mosques at Delhi, Agra, Lahore, Ahmedabad and numerous other towns constructed by Muslim kings, who at some time or other ruled in these places, bear eloquent testimony to the profound love and enthusiasm of these kings for art. Without their patronage, the artists who constructed those magnificent mosques could not have built them.

The Mogul emperors of Delhi, with the exception of the ultrapuritan Aurangzeb, were all passionate patrons of art. The world-celebrated Taj, 'a dream in marble', the Moti Masjid, even royal palaces at Delhi and Agra, each a marvellous synthesis of both engineering and artistic skill, the beautifully laid-out parks in Shrinagar (Shalimar and Nishat Bag) and Lahore, all are effective and irrefutable proof of the great level of artistic development of the period as also of the enthusiastic support of art by the monarchs.

The town was also the stronghold of intellectual life of the period. Under the auspices of the monarch, philosophical duels were arranged at the royal court between the exponents of rival and antagonistic philosophies. Often, even from distant towns and countries, redoubtable champions of different religions were invited by the monarch to debate with the representatives of local religion as to what the best religion was.

About the contacts of India with other countries, O'Malley writes: 'Saints, poets, architects and travellers came to India from Central Asia, Turkey, Persia, and North Africa: the historian, Firishta, was a native of Astrabad on the Caspian Sea; Ibn Batuta came from North Africa; Babar imported architects from Constantinople; according to Persian authorities, the designer of the Taj Mahal was a Turk from the same great city.'[28]

In the earlier periods, the Hindu culture spread as far as Java, Bali, Sumatra, Malaya, and other islands of the Eastern Archipelago. Even today, the life and customs of a good proportion of the people of some of these islands bear the imprint of Hinduism.

Towns were also the centres of learning during those periods. Hindu and subsequently Muslim seminaries were functioning in various towns.

Thus there was a rich, complex, cultural life bristling in the towns of the pre-British period.

Absence of National Sentiment

This culture was however not inspired by any national spirit which did not and could not exist in that period. Even non-religious secular art was not national in content or scope. It glorified the greatness of a monarch (Kutub Minar, stately palaces, tombs loaded with rich architectural designs) or eulogized the monarch's deep undying love for his royal spouse (Taj Mahal). It was the art of the aristocracy or of the religious community, Hindus or Muslims, not of the nation or new social classes composing the modern nation (national in form and class in content). The consciousness of the townspeople, the king, the nobility, the traders, the artisans, was not national consciousness.

The objective and subjective prerequisites (such as a common economic, social and state existence, and the consciousness of such existence) for the emergence of a national culture did not exist in pre-British India. A national culture implies the welding of a community into a nation, which is consummated when, as a result of economic development (the growth of sufficient productive forces and division of labour so as to enmesh the community into a single system of exchange relations, the development of a well-ramified and rapid system of transport), it becomes economically and, in course of time socially and politically more or less integrated. The exigencies of a common economic life tend to accelerate the growth of a common language, which is a further instrument of consolidating the community into a well-knit nation. The nation, in different stages of its consolidation, evolves the consciousness of a single economic, and the urge for an independent state existence. It increasingly evolves a culture which, in song, sculpture, painting, drama, novel or sociological literature, expresses the needs of development of the national society and the aspirations of the individuals, groups and classes comprising it for a free unfettered and richer social, economic and cultural life. The national culture exposes, or kindles emotions of indignation or hostility towards all forces which thwart the development of national society, such as feudal remnants of a pre-national historical period or foreign domination. It cries lyrically, or through ratiocination, against all obstacles to the free material and cultural advance of the nation.

Capitalist economic forms, which have in various societies brought into existence modern nations, also by economically and socially unifying a loose community, engendered the Indian nation. Like its predecessor, the capitalist society has also a class structure. The bourgeois nation too is composed of classes and, in India, was adulterated with a reactionary feudal admixture such as the princes, semi-feudal zemindars, etc. The new social classes, namely, the progressive sections of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, the peasantry and the proletariat, were however the offspring of the new national economy, integral parts of the new national society which existed on a national basis and scale. They felt the pressure (to varying extents) of the reactionary feudal elements as well as the Imperialist rule on their free development. The culture of these new (national) social classes, which had different and even conflicting class interests, in proportion as they developed group consciousness, became national in form though class in content, e.g. the culture of the class-conscious workers which became socialist in content and national in form. These growing cultures of the new classes, namely, the national bourgeoisie, the national proletariat, the national petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry, formed the totality of national culture in India, which also included the cultures of awakening nationalities in different territorial zones of the country such as the Bengalis, the Gujaratis, the Maharashtrians, the Karnatakis, and others.

Such a national culture, comprised of the cultures of awakened social classes and nationalities constituting the modern Indian nation, reflected the needs of free development of those groups as well as of the Indian nation as a whole and obviously could not exist in pre-British India since a united nation with its specific variety of component parts did not exist then. Both the rich, complex and elaborate culture of the feudal and wealthy merchant classes and that of the masses (this latter being principally composed of folk art, fairy tale and religious festival) of pre-British Indian society, lacked a national form and scope.

References

1 Sir Charles Metcalfe quoted by Ghurye, p. 24.
2 Shelvankar, p. 95.
3 Wadia and Merchant, p. 234.
4 ibid, p. 234.
5 Shelvankar, p. 102.
6 Wadia and Merchant, p. 30.
7 Refer Gadgil, pp. 10-12.
8 Shelvankar, pp. 124-5.
9 Gadgil, p. 10.
10 cadia and Merchant, p. 31.
11 Buchanan, p. 15.
12 ibid, p. 15.
13 Karl Marx, p. 391.
14 O'Malley, p. 355.
15 Mukerji, D. P., pp. 1-2.
16 Refer Gadgil, p. 6.
17 Calverton, pp. 16-7.
18 ibid, p. 18.
19 Gadgil, p. 45.
20 Shelvankar, p. 139.
21 ibid, p. 139.
22 ibid, p. 142.
23 ibid, p. 142.

24 ibid, p. 143.
25 Gadgil, p. 12.
26 O'Malley, p. 2.
27 Mukerji, pp. 2-3.
28 O'Malley, p. 8.

0038
LIBRARY
National Law School of India University
Central College Campus,
Bangalore-560 001

CHAPTER II

BRITISH CONQUEST OF INDIA

Transformation of Indian Society, A Product of British Conquest

THE TRANSFORMATION of the pre-British feudal economy, the basic features of which have been described in the previous chapter, into a capitalist economy (however, including feudal survivals) was a long-drawn-out process. It was mainly a result of the British conquest of India, the political and economic policies adopted by the British government and the economic penetration of India chiefly by British capitalism in its three phases of development—trading, industrial, and financial.

While in England, France, Italy, Germany and some other European countries, the substitution of feudal economy by capitalist economy was accomplished by the respetctive capitalist classes of those countries, in India this was mainly achieved by the capitalist class of Britain and not by any class of indigenous capitalists. Hence, this capitalist economic development did not follow independent lines but was determined, in nature and extent, primarily by the needs and interests of British capitalism. This is why India was described as the economic colony of Britain.

A native merchant capitalist class, though weak, existed and was gathering strength in India before and during the period when the British, the French and other foreign companies established contact with India and started a career of commercial penetration and political domination of India. In fact, 'In the early years of the eighteenth century, when the Mogul Empire was disintegrating, a new middle class was beginning to rise. Although the village still retained its position as the productive unit, urban trading centres had arisen as a result of the exchange and distribution of commodities carried on by a middle class which was already becoming wealthy. These towns had attracted numerous classes of handicraftsmen, producing for exchange and export, rather than for local use. The new states which sprang up amidst the ruins of the Mogul Empire were largely controlled financially by the trading class, although their political structure remained feudal. But India was destined to undergo a new invasion from a country which had already reached a more advanced stage of economic development, before these new economic forces had been able to weld her into unity and while she was in a state of transition and disintegration which left her an easy prey to foreign conquest.'[1]

Before the rising merchant class of India could develop sufficient economic and social strength to seize political power from the feudal classes and use that power for capitalist expansion, thereby transforming India from a feudal to a capitalist economic foundation, armed and economically more powerful foreign commercial corporations had already made India the arena of their struggle for economic and political domination. This struggle ended, as is well known, in the final victory of the British East India Company.

British Conquest, its Causes

The political situation of India was extremely propitious for its conquest by a well organized, united, economically and militarily more advanced, foreign power. The conditions of chaos and internecine war which ensued after the disintegration of the Mogul Empire favoured such a conquest.

---

[1] 'How came it that English supremacy was established in India? The paramount power of the Great Mogul was broken by the Mogul viceroys. The power of the viceroys was broken by the Marathas. The power of the Marathas was broken by the Afghans, and while all were struggling against all, the British rushed in and were enabled to subdue them all. A country not only divided between the Mahomedan and Hindu, but between tribe and tribe, between cast and caste; a society whose framework was based on a sort of equilibrium, resulting from a general repulsion and constitutional exclusiveness between all its mem-

bers. Such a country and such a society, were they not pre-destined prey of conquest?'[2]

It was, however, not the political domination of India but the use made of this domination by the British that had profound economic consequences for the Indian society.

India had been conquered formerly many times. But these conquests had led to a change in political regimes only. So far as the basic economic structure of India was concerned, these conquests did not affect it. With the self-sufficient village based on communal possession of land, unity of village industry and agriculture, the village as the unit of revenue assessment and finally village production almost exclusively for village use, this economic structure of pre-British India triumphantly survived, *in its main outlines*, for centuries all foreign invasions, military convulsions, religious upheavals and dynastic wars. All these events, however spectacular and cataslysmic, affected only the social, political or religio-ideological superstructure of Indian society but not its economic base. The self-sufficient village, in which practically the entire population lived, successfully survived the most violent political storms and military holocausts.

This stubborn survival of the economic structure of pre-British Indian society, in spite of the numerous wars and invasions which mainly comprise the history of India, is due to the fact that none of the invaders or belligerents represented a new mode of production, higher than the feudal mode on which the Indian economy was based.* In fact, all invaders from the north, who established their sway over and subsequently settled in India as rulers, belonged, before they came to India, to a society which was economically more backward than the Indian. In fact, they belonged to societies which were still in pre-feudal nomadic or semi-feudal stages of development. As such, their conquest of India and later domicile in and rule over the country did not lead to any overhauling and reconstruction of the feudal economic base of the Indian society. The new rulers accepted the old economic base.

---

* Pre-British Indian economy was the Asiatic variety of feudal economy with certain unique features distinguishing it from European feudal economy. It was based on absence of private property in land, village possession of land, village autarchy based on unity of industry and agriculture, and irrigation and other public works as the concern of the state.

According to Marx, these traits determined the life history and development (or rather lack of development, relative stationariness) of pre-British Indian society.

> 'Arabs, Turks, Tartars, Moguls, who had successively overrun India, soon became Hinduized, the barbarian conquerors being, by an eternal law of history, conquered themselves by the superior civilization of their subjects.'[3]

British Conquest, its Peculiar Features

The British conquest of India was, however, of a different type. It was the conquest of India by a modern nation which had abolished feudalism in its own country and created, in its place, modern bourgeois society. It was the rule by a people who had already overcome feudal disunity of their country based on feudal economy and integrated themselves into a modern nation through the rise and expansion of capitalism which, as the history of modern nations demonstrates, has made the social, political and economic unification of a people possible.[4]

A capitalist nation is socially, politically, economically and culturally stronger than a feudal people. Since capitalism is based on a higher technique of production than feudalism, a capitalist nation is economically more powerful than a feudal people. A capitalist nation has a high sense of patriotism and nationalism since, unlike the feudal people, who are physically separated, socially disunited and politically unamalgamated, it is socially, economically and politically highly integrated, living under one political regime and a single economic system. This is why, throughout the whole history of the British conquest of India, one hardly comes across Britons who betrayed the interests of Britain in India in contrast to hundreds of Indians, princes, generals or merchants, who went over to the British and assisted them to dominate India. National solidarity, sense of discipline, patriotic feeling, habit of co-operation and capacity for organization, are highly developed among capitalist nations because of the very socio-economic milieu under which they live and of which they are the product.* It was, therefore, no wonder that capitalist Britain vanquished disunited feudal India.

Far-Reaching Effects on Economic Structure of India

Since, unlike in the past, India was now ruled by a capitalist nation, this rule had a profound effect on her economic structure. Britain could not use colonial India for her own capitalist economic requirements without uprooting the feudal base of Indian society and introducing capitalist economic forms in India. In fact, every step in the extension of Britain's political sway over India was paralleled by a simultaneous step towards the disruption of the old Indian economic system and introduction of new economic forms.[5]

The history of the progressive British domination of India is, therefore, at the same time, the history of the progressive transformation of the feudal economy of pre-British India into a capitalist economy, however imperfect or distorted. It is bound up with the decay and even extinction of old land relations and artisan and handicraft industries, and with the emergence of new land relations and modern industries. It is, therefore, bound up with the decay of old classes associated with old industries and land system and the rise of new classes resting on new land relations and new modern industries. In place of the village commune appeared the modern peasant proprietor or the zemindar, both private owners of land. While the class of artisans and handicraftsmen disappeared, with the rise of modern industry and transport in India under the British rule, new classes appeared such as the class of capitalists, the class of industrial and transport workers, the class of agricultural labourers, the class of tenants, the class of a new type of merchants connected with trade in products of modern Indian and foreign industries. The British impact on India not only led to the transformation of the economic anatomy of Indian society but also its social physiognomy.

---

* It must, however, be noted that capitalist society, a historically higher social formation than the feudal type, is still composed of classes with divergent and even irreconcilably conflicting interests. However, in its early phase, the national bourgeosie, as a rule, is able to gather all progressive social groups within the fold of national unity, instil the sentiment of nationalism among them and secure their support in the movement against feudalism and for a democratic reconstruction of society as also in their projects of capitalist consolidation and expansion. This becomes increasingly difficult with the decline of capitalism and growth of labour movements based on the principle of class struggle.

> "England has to fulfil a double mission in India: one destructive and the other regenerating—the annihilation of old Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundations of Western society in Asia. ... The British destroyed it (Hindu civilization) by breaking up the native communities, by uprooting the native industry. ...
>
> The political unity of India, more consolidated and extending farther than it ever did under the Great Moguls, was the first condition of its regeneration ... the Zamindari and Ryotwari themselves, involve two distinct forms of private property in land—the great desideratum of Asiatic society.'[6]

Historically Progressive Significance

It may here be remarked that the destruction of the economic disunity of India based on self-sufficient independent village economy and the transformation of India into a single economic unit by the introduction of capitalist forms were historically progressive results of British rule over India. However, to the extent that this transformation was subjected to the economic requirements of British trading, industrial and banking interests, the independent and untrammelled economic development of Indian society was impeded.[7] Thus the British impact both helped as well as hindered the historical progress of Indian society.

In fact, the Indian nationalist movement was the product of the pressure exerted by British interests on the free evolution of the Indian people and the various social classes composing it. This was done by subordinating the interests of such free and normal development to British interests, by obstructing or restricting Indian industrialization, by distorting her agricultural production to meet the raw-material needs of British industries, in short, by keeping India as primarily an agrarian, raw-material producing colony of Britain and as a market for British industries. Indian nationalists, while admitting the progressive role of Britain in India in the initial stages, also criticised her for basically retarding the free, healthy, historical, economic, social and cultural advance of the Indian people.* The very fact of the Indian nationalist movement being in opposition to Britain indicated the pressure of Britain on India.

We shall first observe how capitalism penetrated the Indian village during the British period. It is necessary to follow this process of the growth of capitalism since, thereby, it destroyed the village self-sufficient economy and made village economy an integral part of a single unified Indian economy. It was this economic unification of India which became the objective material basis for the steady amalgamation of the disunited Indian people into a unified nation, for the growth of national sentiment and consciousness among them and for the rise and development of an all-India national movement for their political freedom, and social and cultural progress.

References

1 Joan Beauchamp, p. 16.
2 Karl Marx, p. 58.
3 Karl Marx, p. 59.
4 Refer Laski, Tawney and Stalin.
5 Refer R. C. Dutt.
6 Karl Marx, pp. 59-60.
7 Refer Gadgil, Wadia and Merchant and R. P. Dutt.

---

* 'The Indians will not reap the fruits of the new elements of society scattered among them by the British bourgeoisie, till in Great Britain itself the new ruling classes shall have been supplanted by the industrial proletariat, or till the Hindus themselves shall have grown strong enough to throw off the English yoke altogether.' Karl Marx, p. 63.

CHAPTER III

TRANSFORMATION OF INDIAN AGRICULTURE UNDER BRITISH RULE

Indian Feudalism, its Basic Features

INDIAN FEUDALISM is distinguished from European feudalism by the striking feature that no class of landed feudal nobility with proprietary rights over land ever existed under it. This has been the characteristic of the pre-British Indian society in all its known stages of existence, either in ancient or mediaeval India, under Hindu, Buddhist or Muslim monarchs.

The feudal nobility which existed throughout the pre-British period was given by the monarch only the right to collect and appropriate land revenue over a specific number of villages. The nobility was not the owner of these villages but only the revenue collector keeping the whole or a portion of the land revenue.[1]

The institution of the manor never existed in the pre-British Indian society.

Similarly, it was also not the monarch who was the owner of the agricultural land of the realm. The monarch or the state had a right only to receive a definite proportion of the produce.

> 'The soil in India belonged to the tribe or its subdivision—the village community, the clan or the brotherhood settled in the village—and never was considered the property of the king.'[2]
>
> 'Either in a feudal or an imperial scheme there was never any notion of the ownership of the soil vesting in anybody except the peasantry.'[3]

Since the king was not the proprietor of the land, he could not create a class of nobles with proprietary rights over it. It was only his revenue-collecting power which he bestowed upon and transferred to the nobles.

The very fact that under all types of kings, benevolent or despotic, Hindu, Buddhist or Muslim, no attempt was made to deprive the village communities of the land and establish a class of landowners over them, is a testimony to the fact that the land was not regarded as the property of the king, that the village community was the *de facto* owner of the village land and that the state or the monarch had a claim only over a share of the realized annual produce from it.

(On the other hand, there did not exist individual peasant proprietorship over land either. This means that there did not exist in pre-British India any form of private ownership of land.)

Even when, under the Mogul emperors, innovations were introduced, these in no way affected the fundamental land relations in agriculture. The system of money payment of the land revenue due to the state from the village was introduced but the village possession of and its customary right over the land was not interfered with. The village as the unit of revenue assessment also, continued as a rule.

Introduction of Private Property in Land

The British conquest of India led to a revolution in the existing land system. The new revenue system introduced by the British in India superseded the traditional right of the village community over the village land and created two forms of property in land;) landlordism in some parts of the country and the individual peasant proprietorship in others.)

(It was Lord Cornwallis who, during his term of office, created the first group of landlords in India by introducing the Permanent Land Settlement for Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1793.) These landlords were created out of the tax farmers in the provinces who had been appointed by the political predecessors of the British rulers to collect revenue from these provinces on a commission basis. The Permanent Land Settlement converted these revenue collectors into so many landlords.[4] Under the terms of the settlement, they had henceforth to make a fixed payment to the government of the East India Company.

This was the first breach effected by the British conquest of India in her old land system based on village right over land. Three principal reasons prompted a group of British administrators to introduce the landlord system in India.

First, the East India Company in India adopted British juridico-economic conceptions for land settlements. The economic past of England was fundamentally different from that of India. The English landlord system was conceived and carried out in the spirit of the tradition of private property in land, in the past feudal period. In India, however, the creation of the landlord system had no precedent, in her economic history.

Secondly, from the standpoint of administration, in earlier stages of British rule, it was found easier and more economical to gather land revenue from a few thousand landlords than from a legion of small peasant proprietors. [illegible]

Thirdly, for political-strategic reason, the young British Raj in India needed a social support in the country to maintain itself. It was expected that the new class of landlords, which owed its existence to the British rule, would naturally support it. Lord William Bentinck, Governor General of India from 1828 to 1835, remarked thus:

> 'If security was wanting against extensive popular tumult or evolution, I should say that the Permanent Settlement, though a failure in many other respects and in its most important essentials, has this great advantage at least, of having created a vast body of rich landed proprietors deeply interested in the continuance of the British Dominion and having complete command over the mass of the people.'[5]

This expectation of the East India Company was borne out by subsequent events. The British rule in India always found in landlord classes its staunch supporters.

The East India Company also created a group of landlords out of the petty chiefs by transforming their tribute into revenue and by taking over their political, military and administrative power. There was also a third method adopted for the purpose. Persons who rendered valuable military or other aid to the British government were granted land and were transformed into landlords.

When it was found by experience that it became economically disadvantageous to the government to have fixed permanent revenue from the landlords, the new land settlements so far as revenue was concerned, were introduced on a temporary basis. While the landlords created under those temporary land settlements were invested with proprietary rights over land, the revenue they had to pay to the government could be subsequently revised.[6] The Permanent Zemindari Settlements prevailed in Bengal, Bihar and sections of North Madras and enveloped about 20 per cent of British India. The Temporary Zemindari Settlements covered the major portion of the United Provinces, certain zones of Bengal and Bombay, the Central Provinces, and the Punjab and constituted about 30 per cent of the British Indian territory.

While the British rule created in some parts of the country largescale landed ownership, in other parts, it created individual peasant proprietorship. The latter was known as the Ryotwari. Under the Ryotwari, the individual cultivator was transformed into the owner of the land he tilled.

It was Sir Thomas Munro who felt that the landlord system was alien to the Indian tradition. He advocated, in its place, the Ryotwari system which, he thought, would more or less harmonize with that tradition. He initiated it in 1820, when he was the Governor of Madras, in the major part of that province.

The Ryotwari was subsequently extended to a number of other provinces. The Ryotwari settlements, prevailed in Bombay, Sind, Berar, Madras, Assam, and some other areas constituting 51 per cent of British Indian territory.

Considering that the Ryotwari like the Zemindari was based on private property in land which was unknown to pre-British India, it was as much exotic to the Indian tradition as the Zemindari. Both were points of departure from the traditional Indian economy which excluded the economic category of individual private ownership of land. 'The Ryotwari system, although it was advocated as a closer approach to Indian institutions, in point of fact, by its making the settlement with individual cultivators, and by its assessment on the basis of land, not on the proportion of the actual produce, broke right across Indian institutions no less than the Zemindari system.'[7]

Thus private property in land came into being in India. Land became private property, a commodity in the market, which could be mortgaged, purchased or sold.

Thus the British conquest of India brought about an agrarian revolution. It created the prerequisite for the capitalist development of agriculture by introducing individual ownership of land, namely, peasant ownership and large-scale landlord ownership. This, together with the commercial and other new economic forces which invaded and penetrated the village, undermined both the agrarian economy and the autarchic village of India of the pre-British period. This transformation of the land relations was the most vital link in the chain of causes which transformed the whole pre-capitalist feudal economy of India into the existing capitalist economy. The profound social, political, cultural and psychological results of this material transformation of Indian society will be described subsequently.

New Land Revenue System

Till the village ownership of land existed, the village was the unit of assessment. It was the village community which, through the headman or panchayat, paid the state or the intermediary a specific proportion of the annual agricultural produce as revenue. This proportion may have varied under different regimes, but it was, except in rare cases, the village which was the unit of assessment and the payer of revenue.

The new land system eliminated the village as the unit of land assessment and revenue payment. By creating individual holders of land, it introduced the system of individual land assessment and revenue payment.

Secondly, a new method of fixing the land revenue and its payment was introduced. previously the revenue due to the state or its intermediary to whom the monarch had 'farmed' out the village, was a specified portion of the year's actual produce which varied from year to year. 'This was now replaced by the system of fixed money payments, assessed on land, regularly due in cash irrespective of the year's production, in good or bad harvests, and whether more or less of the land was cultivated or not, and in the overwhelming majority of settlements fixed on individual landholders, whether directly cultivators or landlords appointed by the state.'[8] This new method and form of the land revenue assessment and payment had a far-reaching result.

When previously a part of the actual annual produce constituted the revenue due to the state, the village possession of land was never in danger. If during any year the harvest failed, the land revenue automatically lapsed that year since it was dependent upon and was measured in terms of a portion of the actually realized harvest. The non-payment of the revenue by the village however did not jeopardize its possession of land.

But when, under the new system, fixed money payments assessed on land and not on the annual produce were introduced, the landlord or the peasant proprietor had to meet this revenue claim of the state irrespective of the failure of crop.

The practice of the new land and revenue system logically and inevitably brought in its wake the phenomena of the mortgage, the sale and the purchase of land. When a landholder could not pay the land revenue due to the state out of the returns of his harvest or his resources, he was constrained to mortgage or sell his land. Thus, insecurity of possession and ownership of land—a phenomenon unknown to the pre-British agrarian society—came into existence. The new land system disastrously affected the communal character of the village, its self-sufficient economy and communal social life.

Previously, the village owned the land, looked after and supervised agriculture carried on by different peasant families among whom it had distributed the land according to customary law. Along with this agricultural-economic function, it also performed. through the village panchayat, the judicial function of settling the disputes arising among the peasants in connection with agriculture.

Under the new land system, the village was no longer the owner of land hence no longer also the superintendent of agriculture. The individual landholder was directly connected with the centralized state to which he owed his proprietary right over land and had directly to pay the land revenue. Further, all land disputes were now settled, not by village panchayats, but by the courts established by the centralized state. This undermined the prestige of the panchayats, now shorn of power.

Thus the new land system not only deprived the village of its agricultural-economic functions but also led to the loss of its judicial functions. It also broke the bonds which organically tied the village peasant to the village collectivity.

The organs of the centralized state took over almost all essential functions relating to the village life which were previously performed by the self-governing village organization.

Since the fulfilment of village needs was the objective of the village production and produce, both industrial and agricultural, in pre-British India, this objective determined the character of this produce and production. It was on this basis that the unity of the village agriculture and industry was possible and built and their balance maintained.

Commercialization of Agriculture

One of the consequences of the introduction of the system of new land relations and revenue payment in the form of fixed money payment was that the old objective of village agriculture, namely production for village use, was replaced by that for market. The production and produce were now determined by the new objective, that of sale, and, hence, changed their character.[9]

Under the new system, the peasant produced mainly for the market, which, with the steady improvement of means of transport and expanding operations of trading capital under the British rule, became available to him. He did so with a view to realizing maximum cash, primarily to pay the land revenue to the state which was fixed fairly high and, in course of time, to meet the claim of the moneylender in whose hands he progressively fell due to numerous causes.

This led to the emergence of the phenomenon of what is known as the commercialization of agriculture. This also led to the practice of growing specialized crops by the peasants. The land in groups of villages was solely used, because of its special suitability, for the cultivation of a single agricultural crop such as cotton, jute, wheat, sugarcane and oil-seeds[10] was seen in a gradual extension of the area of some industrial crop under cultivation and a specialization in crops grown in different districts. Export trade increased and internal trade also to a very grea extent. ... The first impetus towards this tendency of commercializatio was noticed when money economy was introduced into the village i the shape of cash assessments, but the effect of this could not go fa until communications were improved. Then slowly rents in kind wen out of fashion and cash rentals were introduced. The effect of this combined with the assessments, was to compel the cultivator to sell part of his produce immediately after harvest; and as, generally, th interest of the moneylender became due also at about the same time the part of the produce that he disposed of at this time was a larg part of his total crop.[11]

---

[9] 'It was this same ease of communication that was bringing about another important change in Indian agriculture. This change might be called, for want of a better term, the commercialization of agriculture. Broadly speaking, the change might be described as a change from cultivation for home consumption to cultivation for the market. ... The spread of transport facilities, when it began to break down the compact character of the village, affected also its agricultural economy. The change

With the rise of modern industries in England, the necessity of raw materials for these industries grew. The Britis government in India pursued economic policies which expanded the area of growth of such raw materials as neede by the British industries. It thereby accelerated the commercialization and specialization of Indian agriculture.

'The commercialization of agriculture had progressed most in thos tracts where the crops were largely grown for export out of the country This was so in the Burma rice area, the Punjab wheat area, the ju area of Eastern Bengal and the Khandesh, Gujerat and Berar cotto tracts. Through the operations of exporters, an efficient market organization for moving the crops quickly to the ports had come into existence.'[12]

'A very large portion of the total crop now came into the marke instead of being retained at home. Naturally, the movement was mo marked in crops in which there was either a large internal or externa trade, but even when, as in the case of the millet crops, the interna trade was not important, a large proportion still came into the marke as a result of certain circumstances.

These circumstances were the payment of government assessmen and the interest of the moneylender. To pay these two dues the cultivators had to rush into the markets just after harvest, and to sell a larg part of their produce at whatever price it fetched. Most of the poo cultivators had to buy back after about six months part of the crop the had sold away at harvest time. The prices at harvest time were ver low but in six months' time they had risen to height which were absolutely ruinous to the cultivator. ...'[13]

From the standpoint of the growth of a single nationa Indian or world economy, this was a step forward in spite the annihilation of self-sufficient village communities and economic misery consequent on this destruction through the cap talist transformation of the Indian economy. It contributed towards building the material foundation, namely, the economic welding together of India and of India with the world, for the national consolidation of the Indian people and the international economic unification of the world.

The commercialization of agriculture was a step forward also from the point of view of production. 'These changes were, firstly, a commercialization of agriculture—by itself quite a beneficial movement. For it brought about a slightly better distribution of the crops and increased the profits of cultivation.'[14]

Diversion of the village agricultural production, from serving the personal needs of the peasant and village requirements to catering for the Indian and world market, not only led to commercialization and specialization of crops but also disrupted the ancient unity of agriculture and industry in the traditional Indian village.

In addition to the two reasons which prompted the farmer to produce for market, namely, to realize maximum cash for the payment of the land revenue and meet the debt claim of the moneylender in whose hands he subsequently and generally fell, there was a third reason also why he produced for sale. The progressive improvement of the means of transport by the government made it possible for him to purchase the manufactured cloth and other necessary articles from the market organized at a village or district fair. Formerly, as a rule, he produced his own cloth and the village artisans met his other needs in return for a part of the annual produce. Now, he bought most of these things from the market. This was also one of the principal causes of the decline of village artisan and other village industries.

The commercialization of village agriculture together with the decay of village industries due to the influx of the manufactured and, later, cheap machine-made goods of Britain and subsequently of other countries and even of Indian industries, seriously affected the balanced village economy.

Breakdown of Traditional Indian Village

Thus, the unity of village agriculture and industry, the basic pillar of the self-sufficient village economy, was disrupted.

The economic base of the autarchic village existence was undermined.

> 'Owing to the peculiar form of rent in kind by which it is bound to a definite kind of product and production, owing furthermore to the indispensable combination of agriculture and domestic industry attached to it, also to the almost complete self-sufficiency in which the present family supports itself and to its independence from markets and from the movements of production and history in the social spheres outside it, . . . this form is quite suitable for becoming the basis of stationary conditions of society, such as we see in Asia.'[15]

Further, 'domestic handicraft and manufacturing labour, as side issues to agriculture which forms the basis, is the prerequisite of that mode of production upon which natural economy rests, in European antiquity and the Middle Ages as well as in the Indian commune of the present day, in which the traditional organization has not yet been destroyed. The capitalist mode of production completely dissolves this connection.'[16]

The communal and self-governing character of the village was undermined by other measures and encroachments also. In addition to the village being deprived of its traditional possession of the village land, it also lost the right to the free use of pasture and forest land in its proximity. The peasants and other village folk used this land for collecting fuel and grazing cattle, under the control of the village as a whole. Further, this land had a decisive value for the maintenance of the general village economy and agriculture. The new state expropriated the village of its possession and free use of this peripheral land. Regarding Forest Laws which brought this about Pattabi Sitaramayya had remarked: 'With a single stroke of the pen . . . Government had extinguished the immemorial communal rights of the Ryot, and village society had thus been revolutionized.'[17]

It was because of these functions, such as village agriculture under the control of the village, its neighbouring forest zone under its own possession and administration that a vital collective life existed and thrived in the village. The village was a self-governing and self-determining organization. Village life was one organic whole. It was because of their daily collaboration in matters of common interest which they themselves decided, that a live collective village consciousness was maintained among the villagers. With the removal of land, both agricultural and forest, from the possession and collective control of the village, and its transformation into private and state property, the old bonds of economic co-operation and common interests between the villagers dissolved. The economic functions, formerly carried out by the village community, were now taken over by the centralized state. The self-governing village based on the co-operation and collective life of its members broke down. Private property and market further drove a wedge into and dissolved the nexus of the co-operative relations among the villagers based upon the old economy.[18]

The centralized state also took over other functions of the village community such as defence. The village slowly but steadily became transformed from a self-governing community into an administrative unit of the centralized state and a dependent economic part of the national economy, nay even of the world economy. The economic and administrative autarchy of the traditional village disappeared. Collective village life based on common economic interests and the resultant co-operative relations gave way to a new village existence based on competition and struggle. Competitive economic relations resulting out of private property and market replaced former co-operative socio-economic relations.

The creation and penetration of capitalist economic relations into the village together with the political-administrative unification of India by assembling all hitherto independent centres into a single unified state system struck a mortal blow to the seemingly impregnable traditional village.

With new social relations in production, distribution and exchange, appeared new institutions. Formerly custom had mostly governed the relationship between the members of the village community. The village committees (panchayats) had regulated the relations between and adjusted disputes among villagers. Now legal codes and law courts established by the new regime governed the complex social relations arising out of the new land system based on private property in land. 'Over the face of the agrarian world took place a change such as England had witnessed in the sixteenth century: the disruption of the medieval framework, the influx of foreign agents and of pecuniary considerations and of contractual relations, and the substitution of individual responsibility, "enterprise" and freedom for co-ordinated effort along paths prescribed by custom.'[19]

Thus twilight fell over the ancient traditional Indian village, the seemingly invulnerable 'Rock of Ages'. It could successfully resist all former political upheavals, wars and invasions. But it succumbed before the action of the political and economic measures of a new type of political regime historically never experienced before and of the commercial and industrial forces of modern capitalism.

Historically speaking, the destruction of the self-sufficient village was a progressive event though it involved much tragic destruction such as that of collective life among the village population, of tender human relations between them and of economic security among its members unless a war or a famine intervened.

But on the other hand the village life existed on a narrow village scale, was poor in cultural quality, unprogressive and passive. If the Indian people were to advance to higher forms of social existence such as nationhood, economic unity and intellectual progress, the self-sufficient village had to leave the stage of history.

History moves dialectically. Progress is achieved not through the quantitative extension of the good aspects of the old but its qualitative transformation. Higher forms of cooperation and social existence emerge not through the quantitative expansion of old forms but by their dissolution. It is true that the capitalist transformation of the village economy was brought about by the destruction of village co-operation but its historical progressive role lies in the fact that it broke the self-sufficiency of the village economic life and made the village economy a part of the unified national economy. It was a historically necessary step towards integrating the Indian people economically. It simultaneously broke the physical, social and cultural isolation of the village people by creating the possibility of large-scale social exchange through the establishment of such means of mass transport as railways and automobiles.

How could a united nation evolve out of a people who are living an isolated existence in numerous centres, who are physically divided and between whom there is very little social and economic exchange? How can the consciousness of a people be elevated to a national plane when they live independent isolated lives in small groups? Conditions of material existence determine the nature of consciousness and the conditions of narrow material existence in the self-sufficient village could give birth, in the mass, only to the village consciousness. With rare exceptions, the population in the bulk could not transcend the village outlook and village consciousness under the conditions of life in the hermetically sealed village.

It is true that the introduction of capitalist relations destroyed village co-operation. But this co-operation was co-operation in maintaining the narrow self-sufficient village existence. That is why the population of the autarchic village could, for centuries, remain unperturbed by catastrophic social events such as the rise and fall of empires and dynasties, or the devastation and destruction of entire districts and provinces outside their narrow village boundaries. The village solidarity bound up with the self-sufficient nature of the village thrived only in the absence of any higher form of solidarity such as the national or the international. The village co-operation was founded upon the village self-sufficiency and it fell with the latter's destruction. Since it was bound up with the latter, it could not be saved.

But the capitalist unification of India based on the destruction of the village autarchy and co-operation on the narrow village scale paved the way for higher forms of economy and social collaboration. It paved the way for a national economy and nation-scale collaboration among the Indian people. It became the material premise for the emergence of the Indian nation out of the amorphous mass of the Indian people which, before this unification, were scattered in numerous villages between which there was very little exchange, social or economic, and, hence, which had hardly any positive common interests.

However tragic, the destruction of the autarchic village and the collective life of the people living in it, it was historically necessary for the economic, social and political unification of the Indian people. Social progress is achieved, as history shows, through the mutual action of historical forces. It should not be forgotten that these villages were the strongholds of social passivity and intellectual inertia, reproducing the same type of existence for ages. They were powerful obstacles to all attempts at unification of India in the past. We need not shed any reactionary tears over their extinction.

References

1 Refer O'Malley and Baden Powell.
2 Radhakamal Mukerji, p. 16.
3 ibid., p. 36.
4 Refer Thompson and Garratt. O'Malley and Baden Powell.
5 Quoted by Keith, Vol, I. p. 215.
6 Refer Ranga, Baden Powell and Datta.
7 R. P. Dutt, p. 213.
8 ibid., p. 207.
9 Refer Gadgil, pp. 153-5.
10 Refer Gadgil, and Buchanan.
11 Gadgil, pp. 153-4.
12 ibid., p. 154.
13 ibid., p. 155.
14 ibid., p. 162.
15 Karl Marx, p. 82.
16 ibid., pp. 82-3.
17 Sitaramayya, p. 62.
18 Refer R. C. Dutt and Shelvankar.
19 Shelvankar, p. 106.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF INDIAN AGRICULTURE

Emergence of National Agriculture

Part 1 of Ch 1

The intro to Part 1; Ch 1

WITH the establishment of new land relations based on private property in land and the right of the individual landowner freely to dispose of his property in land, the agrarian economy of India entered a new and hitherto historically unknown stage of development and the agrarian population a new phase of social and economic existence. We will now study the problems which arose out of the new situation.

One vital fact, however, which emerged from the new situation was that with the introduction of new land relations in agriculture, it no longer had an isolated village character and significance. A national agriculture, as an integral dependent part of the total national Indian economy came into existence. The problems of Indian agriculture, consequently, acquired a national character. The technical-economic problems of agriculture such as the formation of compact economic holdings, technical reorganization of agriculture by the introduction of modern agricultural machinery, scientific manure and other scientific methods of cultivation, became national problems.

Under the British rule, Indian agriculture rose to the level of a national agriculture but it did not grow into a prosperous agriculture. The material conditions of the agrarian population as a whole also did not rise.

Nor did agriculture as a whole reach any high level of organization and productivity. In fact, the history of Indian agriculture, in spite of its becoming national in character, under the British rule was a history of its 'continuous and increasing disorganization'. It was also the history of the progressive impoverishment of the agricultural population, of the steady growth of their indebtedness, of the increasing expropriation of the peasants of their land and their transformation into paupers or the agricultural proletariat.

Growth of Subdivision and Fragmentation of Land

One of the most alarming and ruinous features of Indian agriculture was the extreme subdivision of land and its fragmentation. The amount of land available to each cultivator declined or, in other words, the holdings progressively became more and more uneconomic.

There were a number of factors which brought about this state of things. The introduction of capitalist relations in agriculture in the European countries was paralleled by the creation of compact farms as units of cultivation. In India, on the other hand, no such reorganization of land was accomplished by the British. From the standpoint of ownership and individual cultivation, the land remained intermixed. The disadvantages of land fragmentation and the open field system continued.[1]

With the establishment of private property in land and the individual's right to its free disposal, there appeared centrifugal tendencies within the joint family, the members of which previously jointly held and cultivated the land assigned to it by the village. This led to the division of the family land among various claimants, resulting in increasing subdivision of land.[2]

Another factor which contributed to the process of subdivision of land was the growing practice among the landholders and even tenants to rent or sub-rent the land. The holding, already small, was, thus, dissected into still smaller holdings.

However, the most decisive factor which accelerated the process of subdivision of land and its fragmentation was overpressure on agriculture brought about by the economic ruination of millions of urban and village handicraftsmen and artisans.

The growing process of persons dependent on agriculture is seen in the following Census Record:

Percentage of population dependent on agriculture:[3]

1891	61.1
1901	65.5
1911	72.2
1921	73.0
1931	75.0

We can compare this growth of dependence on agriculture with the decline of dependence on industry.

Percentage of population dependent on industry:[4]

1911	5.5
1921	4.9
1931	4.3
1941	4.2

In fact, this process had been appreciably growing since the middle of the nineteenth century. The Famine Commission Report of 1880 already remarked that 'the numbers who have no other employment than agriculture are greatly in excess of what is really required for the thorough cultivation of the land.'[5]

We can contrast this tendency with the opposite tendency in the European countries. 'In France the percentage of agricultural population fell from 67.6 to 53.6 between 1876 and 1921, in Germany, the percentage fell from 61 to 37.8 between 1875 and 1919, in England and Wales it fell from 38.2 to 20.7 between 1871 and 1921 and in Denmark from 71 to 57 between 1880 and 1921.'[6]

This phenomenon was known as 'de-industrialization' of India, i.e. the destruction of the old handicraft industry without the proportional growth of modern industry. The result was increasing overcrowding on land.

The overcrowding on land accelerated the process of subdivision and fragmentation of land. Regarding a typical Deccan village which he surveyed, H. Mann remarked that the size of the average holding diminished from 40 acres in 1771 to 7 acres in 1915.

The process of subdivision and fragmentation of land was not confined to the Deccan. It continued with varying intensity in all provinces and all over India. 'In the United Provinces the cultivated area comes to an average of 2.5 acres per cultivator. In Bengal the size of the average holding is 3.1 acres, in Assam 3 acres, in Bihar and Orissa 3.1, in Madras 4.9, C.P. 8.5, in the Punjab 9.2, and in Bombay 12.2.'[7]

These were, however, the figures of the average holdings. They do not reveal the fact that the overwhelming number of holdings were of small size and uneconomic. According to the *Agricultural Journal of India* for 1926, holdings were classified as follows:

Over ten acres	24 per cent
5 to 10 acres	20 per cent
1 to 5 acres	33 per cent
One acre or less	23 per cent

Even regarding the Punjab, a relatively thriving agricultural zone, the Royal Commission on Agriculture remarked as follows:

> 'The Punjab figures . . . indicate that 22.5 per cent of the cultivators cultivate 1 acre or less, 15 per cent cultivate between 1 and 2½ acres, 17.9 per cent between 2½ acres and 5 acres and 20.5 per cent between 5 and 10 acres.'

The process of subdivision of land was also paralleled by that of its increasing fragmentation. The Congress Agrarian Inquiry Committee Report described the situation in the United Provinces thus:

> 'This process of fragmentation of holding has steadily continued for the past so many years. It is difficult to estimate the number of peasants who own plots of from a hundredth to a four hundredth of a bigha but it is fairly large.'[8]

This extreme fragmentation of holdings made it very difficult for the agriculturist to carry on agricultural operations efficiently.[9] The subdivision and fragmentation of land reached all over the country such a disastrous limit that, 'Even the plough may not be used on many small farms. . . . As with greater fractionalization of holdings, the supply of agricultural labour increases, the use of spade and hoe becomes more common.'[10] This was a strong technical evidence showing the appalling degree of subdivision and fragmentation of land.

The absolute growth of population was an additional factor which intensified overcrowding on land. The role of that factor, however, was often magnified.

It is necessary to recognize 'the fact that this extreme, exaggerated, disproportionate, and wasteful dependence on agriculture as the sole occupation for three-fourths of the people, is not an inherited characteristic of the old, primitive Indian society surviving into the modern period, but is, on the contrary, in its present scale a *modern* phenomenon and the direct consequence of imperialist rule. The disproportionate dependence on agriculture has progressively increased under British rule. This is the expression of the destruction of the old balance of industry and agriculture and the relegation of India to the role of an agricultural appendage of imperialism.'[11]

The overpressure on agriculture could not be explained by lack of sufficient land either. 'Only 34.2 per cent of the total area is actually cultivated. Leaving 35.2 per cent of the land as being not available for agriculture, we still have 30.6 per cent of the total area which can yet be cultivated. In Sind and the Punjab, there are large tracts of potentially very fertile land which only need water but the Government does not propose irrigating these areas. Moreover, the opening up of new agricultural tracts requires capital and the Indian peasantry with all its burden of indebtedness cannot possibly afford the necessary initial investment. The government being supremely indifferent to the problem does not offer any subsidies or easy financial aid in any other form.'[12]

Effects of Fragmentation

The effects of the extreme subdivision and fragmentation of land were highly detrimental both to agriculture and the economic position of the agriculturist.

Large compact tracts of land as units of cultivation are physical premises for large-scale scientific agriculture. Small holdings, further, split up into scattered and smaller plots, could not be made the adequate basis for a prosperous agriculture.

If small holdings largely explained the poverty of the peasant, this poverty of his explained why the peasant was unable to improve the methods and technique of production. Having no money to invest in land, the peasant was constrained to stick to old primitive methods and means of production. He could not utilize scientific manure and modern agricultural machinery nor could he keep his livestock in a state of robust health and strength. This only led to the progressive deterioration of agriculture.

As a result of overpressure on agriculture, pasture land providing fodder for the livestock was increasingly encroached upon for the purposes of agriculture and steadily diminished. This resulted in the diminution of fodder supply for the livestock which, consequently, in absence of sufficient nutrition, lost in vitality. This adversely affected agricultural productivity.

These multiple factors explain why the yield per acre of cultivated land steadily declined.

Visvesaraya remarked: 'On the normal pre-war basis, the average production of British India including irrigated crops cannot be more than twenty-five rupees per acre; in Japan. it cannot be less than one hundred and fifty.'[13]

We will now consider other factors which affected agriculture and the conditions of the agriculturists.

New Land Revenue System

As observed earlier, (the British government inaugurated an entirely new land revenue system. The agriculturist had to pay, under the new system, land revenue (in form of a definite sum) to the government every year whether the annual crop was successful or not.) In a country like India where there was no extensively ramified irrigation system guaranteeing security against absence of or insufficient rains, where even in a normal year he realized a meagre sum for his crops in the Indian or world market, it was inevitable that, sooner or later, the agriculturist could not meet the annual demand of the state. He steadily sank into poverty and indebtedness.

(That land revenue had been one of the main causes of the growth of poverty of the agriculturist and his resultant indebtedness) was recognized as early as 1892.[14] Vaughan Nash, in his book *The Great Famine* remarked: 'I was perfectly satisfied during my visit to Bombay that the authorities regarded the moneylender as their mainstay for the payment of revenue'.[15]

The land revenue system established by the British thus proved to be one of the main factors which led to the impoverishment and indebtedness of the agricultural population. 'A system which establishes fixed revenue assessments in cash, at a uniform figure for thirty-year periods at a time, irrespective of harvests or economic changes, may appear convenient to the revenue collector or to the government statesmen computing their budget; but to the countryman, who has to pay the uniform figure from a wildly fluctuating income, it spells ruin in bad years, and inevitably drives him into the hands of the moneylender. Tardy suspensions or remission in extreme conditions may strive to mitigate, but cannot prevent this process.'[16]

The harmful effects of the rigid land revenue system were further aggravated by the high amount of land revenue.

At the time of the political transfer of India from the East India Company to the British Crown in 1857-8, the land revenue of the whole of India was £15.3 million. There was a progressive rise in the land revenue during the subsequent period. By 1900-1, it rose to £17.5 million; by 1911-12 to £20 million and by 1936-7, it amounted to £23.9 million.[17]

There was a constantly operating tendency of rise in the land revenue. 'In Madras, Bombay and the United Provinces in particular, assessments have gone up by leaps and bounds' remarked Radhakamal Mukerjee in his work *Land Problems in India*.[18] He further stated: 'While the agricultural income during three decades (from 1890 to 1920) increased roughly by 30, 60 and 23 per cent, the land revenue increased by 57, 22.6 and 15.5 per cent in the United Provinces, Madras and Bombay respectively. Such a large increase of land revenue coupled with its commutation in cash and its collection at harvest time has worked very unfavourably on the economic condition of cultivators of uneconomic holdings who form the majority in these provinces.'[19]

Excessive land revenue, in the conditions of the growth of uneconomic holdings due to the subdivision of and overcrowding on land, was the prime cause of the impoverishment of the Indian agriculturist in the earlier stages of the British rule. The progressive inability of the agriculturist to meet the increasing revenue claims of the state from his declining income brought about his subsequent indebtedness.

Commercialization of Agriculture

There was another factor which adversely affected the agriculturist. It was the factor of the commercialization of agriculture under the British rule. The agriculturist now produced for the Indian and the world market. He became thereby subject to all the vicissitudes of the ever erratic market. He had to compete with formidable international rivals like the big agrarian trusts of America. Europe, and Australia, which produced on a mass scale and by means of tractors and other modern agricultural machinery while he himself cultivated his miserable strip of land by means of the labour power of a couple of famished bullocks and the primitive plough. Further, the commercialization made the agriculturist dependent, for sale of his product, on the middlemen, the merchants. The merchant, by his superior economic position, took full advantage of the poverty of the peasant. The poor peasant, having no economic reserves and confronted by the revenue claims of the government and increasingly also by the claim of the usurer, had to sell his product to the middleman at the harvest time. This transaction originating in sheer necessity brought a less amount to the peasant than it would have if he could have waited. The middleman thus appropriated a very large share of profit.

Growth of Poverty

There were other factors which also contributed to the growth of poverty among the agriculturists. In addition to such economic earthquakes as the periodically occurring agrarian crises, there were such non-social causes as drought, or devastating rains which also brought economic misery to the agriculturists. The Indian peasant hardly had any economic reserves to fall back upon in bad times. A large proportion of Indian peasants got into debt due to their inability to pay land revenue as a result of bad monsoons. Famines were a feature of the economic existence of the Indian people.

In addition to land tax, the agriculturist had to pay a host of taxes on articles, of bare necessity such as kerosene, oil and salt. 'A poor cultivator, who not only pays to the state a substantial portion of his income from land, but also bears the burden of the duties on sugar, kerosene, oil, salt and other articles of general consumption, seems to receive very different treatment from the big zemindar or landholder in areas where "permanent settlement" prevails, who owns extensive estates for which he may pay to the state a merely nominal charge fixed over a century ago and declared to be unalterable for ever, while his agricultural income is totally exempt from income tax.'[20]

Further, the state monopoly of forests prohibiting the people from picking wood for fuel or construction purposes forced the peasant to use cowdung for fuel instead of utilizing it as manure. This reduced the returns from the land and further increased the poverty of the Indian agriculturist. 'The havoc done by the Forest Laws is not sufficiently appreciated. They vied only with Land Revenue assessments and the Salt Tax in burdening the people with fetters they could not bear.'[21]

It is obvious that the agriculturist who could not provide enough food for himself and his family, would be unable to keep his livestock in a fit condition. While the bullocks multiplied, the nourishment they received diminished. This led to the villages being 'overstocked with herds of wretched, starving cattle', and accelerated the decline in the productivity of agriculture.

The cumulative effect of all the factors enumerated above explains the growth of the phenomenal poverty of the agricultural population. The growing disparity between his income and the claims he had to meet, constrained the agriculturist to contract more and more debts, even the interest on which he was unable to pay.

It was a vicious circle. Arising out of his poverty, the indebtedness of the agriculturist became, as it grew, the main cause of accentuating his poverty. Unable to pay his debt and even interest on it, the agriculturist not only lost his crops to the moneylender but rapidly lost his land to him. This process of expropriation of the land of the agriculturists advanced during the present century at an accelerated rate.

Growth of Rural Indebtedness

There was a progressive rise in the indebtedness of the Indian agriculturists under the British rule. It swelled from decade to decade.

The agrarian indebtedness had reached a high level even in 1880. 'One-third of the landholding classes are deeply and inextricably in debt and at least an equal proportion are in debt, though not beyond the power of recovering themselves.'[22]

The indebtedness of the rural population was increasing since 1880, even at a geometrical rate. This was recognized by all investigators of this phenomenon.[23]

'The vast majority of peasants live in debt to the money-lender.' (Simon Report, Vol. I, p. 16).

There were various attempts, from time to time, to assess the agrarian indebtedness which assumed colossal proportions. These estimates revealed the growing curve of this indebtedness. Maclagan estimated it at 300 crores for British India in 1911; M. L. Darling at 600 crores in 1925; the Central Banking Inquiry Committee Report at 900 crores in 1929; and the Agricultural Credit Department at 1,800 crores in 1937.[24]

The world economic crisis of 1929 affected the Indian agricultural classes very seriously. They lost so heavily due to the catastrophic fall of prices of agricultural commodities that during the period from 1929 to 1936 their total indebtedness rose to the staggering figure of about Rs. 1,800 crores. 'The main cause of this phenomenal increase has been that while since 1929 the incomes of the agriculturists have been reduced by more than half, the burden of taxation on the peasantry has remained the same. The remissions granted by the Government in certain distressed areas have been miserably small. . . . In the Zemindari areas an additional factor has been the increased burden of litigation cost on the peasantry. Complete inability to pay rents on the part of the tenants has led to large accumulation of arears and to extensive litigation by the zemindars. This has taxed the cultivators heavily who in their present condition have to rely entirely on the money-lender for meeting the litigation costs.'[25]

'By far the largest part of indebtedness is due to the fact that over

75 per cent of the peasants cannot get even a bare livelihood from land. . . .[26]

'Thus indebtdeness is one of the acutest problems of rural India today. . . . The position today is that over 80 per cent of the peasants with their present holdings can never pay up their debts.'[27]

Transfer of Land from Cultivating to Non-Cultivating Owners

[illegible]

(Due to the expanding indebtedness of the agriculturists, large-scale transfer of land from the hands of the peasant proprietors to the moneylenders took place in the Ryotwari areas and mass ejection of tenants from land occupied by them in the Zemindari zones.)

The moneylender exploited the economic helplessness of the peasant with the thoroughness of the traditional Shylock. The rates of interest, though varying from province, were always high. They ranged from a minimum of 12 per cent to even the exhorbitant figure of 200 or 300 per cent[28]. This made the village *sahukar* an object of almost universal dislike, even detestation. He was looked upon as the very embodiment of rapacity and inhumanity and served the role of the villain in literature, stage plays and film stories in the country.

The moneylender, in addition to legal methods, employed also fraudulent measures to squeeze out the agriculturist such as making him sign a bond for a sum greater than what had been advanced to him, keeping false accounts and others. He took advantage of the ignorance of the peasant who could not detect fraud and of his poverty which made it difficulty or often impossible to resort to court action.

The attempt made by the government to solve the problem of rural indebtedness, by means of a series of legislative measures, did not meet with any tangible success. 'Legislative measures to deal with the problem of indebtedness have proved a comparative failure' commented the Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture.

Regarding the causes of the colossal irremediable and unbearable indebtedness of the agriculturists, the Report added:

> 'To a very great extent, the cultivator in India labours not for profit, not for a net return but for subsistence. The overcrowding of the people on the land, the lack of alternative means of securing a living, the diffi-

> culty of finding any avenue of escape....combine to force the cultivator to grow food wherever he can and on whatever terms he can. Where his land has passed into the possession of his creditor, no legislation will serve his need: no tenancy law will protect him; for food he needs land and for land he must plead before a creditor to whom he probably already owes more than the total value of the whole of his assets.'

Under the new land system, land became a marketable article. While giving the peasant the freedom to mortgage or sell his land, it also gave the creditor of the indebted peasant freedom to seize the latter's land. In the conditions of poverty engendered by the new economic environs more and more land began to be transferred to the moneylender in lieu of the debt the peasant owed to him. Largescale expropriation of the Indian peasanty leading to the widespread growth of absentee landlordism took place.

Transfer of land from the cultivating owner to the non-cultivating owner, a merchant or a usurer, did not result in any improvement in the means and methods of agriculture. The Deccan Commission appointed in 1892 to report on the working of the Agriculturists' Relief Act criticized 'the transfer of the land in an agricultural country to a body of rack-renting aliens who do nothing for the improvement of the land.'[29]

The heavy burden of debt had an undermining effect on the incentive of the agriculturist and agriculture. Henry W. Wolff, late president of the International Co-operative Alliance, remarked: 'The country is, so Sir Daniel Hamilton has graphically put it "in the grip of the Mahajan". It is the bonds of debt which shackle agriculture. It is usury—the rankest, most extortionate, most merciless usury—which eats the marrow out of the bones of the ryot and condemns him to a life of penury and slavery in which not only is economic production hopeless, but in which also energy and will become paralysed and man sinks down beaten into a state of resigned fatalism from which hope is shut out and life drags on wearily and unprofitably as if with no object in view. There is no use in denying the fact. It is plain to all eyes.'

Rise of Serfdom

Indebtedness led even to the transformation of the agriculturist into a serf in some parts of India. Economic servitude arising from modern indebtedness acquired a medieval form.

> 'Of the extreme to which economic servitude can extend, where the moneylender's grip is strong, two instances may be given. In Bihar and Orissa, we were told of a system known as kamiauti....which is practically one of cultivation by serfs. Kamias are bound servants of their masters; in return for a loan received they bind themselves to perform whatever menial services are required of them in lieu of the interest due on the loan. Landlords employing labour for the cultivation of their private land prefer to have a first call on the labourers they require, and hence the practice arose of binding the labourers by means of an advance, given conditionally upon their services remaining always at the call of the landlord for the purpose of agriculture. Such labourers get a daily wage in kind for those days on which they work for their creditors.... In practice the system leads to absolute degradation of the kamias. In the first place, the kamia cannot bargain about his wages.... The wages represent only one-third of the day's wage for free labour hired, for example, by a contractor for road repair work.... The kamia never sees any money, unless it be the occasional few pice he may earn in his spare time. Consequently, he has no chance of ever repaying the principal of his debt and becoming a free man again. A Kamiauti bond, therefore, involves a life sentence.'[30]

Under the new legal system, the rich moneylender had an advantage over the poor agriculturist since litigation was expensive. While the former could employ lawyers and hold out even if the suit dragged on, the poor agriculturist, who could hardly maintain himself on his income, could much less mobilize the costly legal services of lawyers. In enforcing his claims, the shrewd moneylender generally took full advantage of that situation.

The heavy indebtedness of the agriculturists was frequently explained on the ground that they suffered from the habit of extravagance and squandered money on social and religious occasions. Investigation of experts into the family budgets of the agriculturists, however, revealed that the expenses incurred by them for such functions constituted only a small fraction of their income.[31]

Another feature of this sorry state of things was that even if the measures of the government or humanitarian bodies brought some economic advantage to a section of agriculturists, in the condition in which he was placed, he generally did not benefit much by them. The moneylender or landlord, in lieu of his claims which were too formidable to meet completely, seized this gain.

The cause of the immense poverty of the Indian agriculturists and their resultant indebtedness as also of the decline of productivity of Indian agriculture worked on the basis of uneconomic holdings and primitive technique, lay deeper. It was due to the predominantly colonial character of Indian agriculture and general Indian economy with all their disabilities for a normal free evolution.

The immense poverty of the Indian agriculturists and their indebtedness progressively led to the expropriation of their land by the merchant, the moneylender or the landlord. The number of peasant proprietors diminished and land steadily concentrated in the hands of an increasingly narrowing number of owners. While a very small fraction of the poor and middle strata of the peasantry grew into rich peasants, by far the bigger portion of them dropped into the ranks of tenants or agricultural labourers.

Growing Polarization of Classes in Agrarian Areas

Thus a process of class differentiation went on, continuously and at an increasing pace, among the agricultural population The number of cultivating owners and tenants steadily diminished while that of the non-cultivating landlords grew.

This was the new type of absentee and non-cultivating landlord class which emerged in addition to the class of zemindars created and confirmed in permanent proprietory rights by the British government, such as the class of zemindars in Bengal, Bihar, Madras and other parts of the country.

The following figures reveal the high rate at which the growth of non-cultivating landlords and the parallel growth of agricultural labourers took place in British India:[32]

	1921 Millions	1931 Millions
Non-cultivating landlords	3.7	4.1
Cultivators (owners or tenants)	74.6	65.5
Agricultural labourers	21.7	33.5

We will illustrate this process by taking instances of the Provinces of Madras and Bengal

Figures for Madras (per thousand)[33]

	1901	1911	1921	1931
Non-working landlords	19	23	49	34
Non-working tenants	1	4	28	16
Working landlords	484	426	381	390
Working tenants	151	207	225	120
Proletariat	345	340	317	429

Figures for Bengal (per thousand)[34]

	1921	1931	Percentage increase or decrease
Non-cultivating landlords or rent receivers	390	634	+62
Cultivating owners and tenants ..	9,275	6,041	—35
Proletariat	1,805	2,719	+50

Other provinces revealed the same tendency of the growing class differentiation among the agrarian population. Since the same causes operated everywhere, the same consequence appeared.

There was a progressive rise in the number of agricultural labourers. The number which stood at 7½ millions in 1882, swelled to 21½ millions in 1921 and about 33 millions in 1931. Experts on this subject reached the conclusion that since 1931, there was a further growth of the agricultural proletariat.[35]

Non-cultivating landlords, cultivating owners and tenants, and land labourers did not exhaust all social groups associated with agriculture. Below the stratum of landless proletariat, there were other sections of agricultural population who lived in great poverty and conditions almost of serfdom.

Serf and semi-serf forms of labour were rampant in many parts of the country. Dublas and Halis in Gujerat, Padial in Tamil Nad, Bhakela in Hyderabad, Barsalia in the C.P. and such groups in other zones, formed the nethermost stratum of Indian society, living in conditions of almost medieval economic exploitation and social bondage.[36]

The conditions of some of these groups were those of near slavery as in the case of Halis in Gujerat. 'Halis are agricultural labourers who do not work for wages at their own convenience but are maintained hereditarily as permanent estate servants by the larger landlords who provide them also with home and food. They cannot resign and seek occupation elsewhere. There is virtually no difference between the position of thse Halis and the slaves on the American plantations prior to the Civil War except that the courts would not recognize the rights of the masters as absolute over the persons and services of these people. They are freemen *de jure* but slaves *de facto*.'[37]

The conditions of life and labour of workers of such agrarian capitalist enterprises as the extensive rubber, tea and coffee plantations, a great majority of which were owned by European companies, were also bad. European capital selected colonial countries as fields of investment mainly because labour in these countries was chaep. Apart from the low level of wages of the workers on these mostly European-owned plantations, they were subjected to a number of restrictions due to the fact that they were required to stay with their families on the estates.[38]

Rise of Agrarian Proletariat

As mentioned before, due to the impoverishment of the large section of peasant proprietors, the class of land labourers rapidly grew in India, and was estimated by experts to be even so big as to constitute nearly half the agricultural population. The condition even of the poor peasant owners who still owned their lands, or sub-tenants, was so bad that there was no appreciable difference between it and that of land-labourers.

> 'We find it difficult to draw a clear line between cultivation by farm servants and sub-letting. Sub-letting is rarely on a money rental. It is commonly on a sharing system, the landlord getting 40 to 60 or even 80 per cent of the yield. The tenant commonly goes on from year to year eking out a precarious living on such terms, borrowing from the landlord, being supplied by him with seed, cattle and implements. The farm servant, on the other hand, uses the landlord's seed, cattle and implements, gets advances in cash from time to time, or petty requirements, and is paid from the harvests either a lump sum of grain or proportion of the yield. The farm servant may in some cases be paid a little cash as well as a fixed amount of grain. The tenant may cultivate with his own stock and implements but there is, in practice, no

very clear line between the two; and when the landlord is an absentee, it is not always obvious whether the actual cultivator is a farm labourer or a sub-tenant.'[39]

The class of agricultural proletariat combined with the large mass of the poor peasants, a good proportion of whom were also semi-proletarians, formed the large majority of the agricultural population. Their number daily increased due to a process of steady impoverishment of the upper peasantry and the expropriation of their land. Only a tiny fraction of the middle and upper layers grew into prosperous small and big landlords.

Ch1, Part 1

Rise of Parasitic Land-owning Class

This class of landlords, composed of moneylenders, merchants or those who had amassed wealth in urban vocations, like the old class of zemindars, in general did not play any useful progressive role in agricultural development. Both these landlord classes, old and new, evinced no live interest in agriculture beyond that of gathering rent from their tenants. In a country like India where there were limited industrial avenues of capital investment and where there was excessive demand for land, investment in land was found more profitable.

Agriculture was alien to this new non-agriculturist type of landlord, the merchant, the moneylender, or the wealthy city dweller. As a rule, he did not feel any urge to organize and look after agricultural production on his land, to improve its methods and technique.[40] Since he had no vital interest in agriculture, he had purchased or secured land from the peasant debtor in a haphazard way, and not in a compact mass. Since land hunger was acute in the countryside, he leased out his land to tenants on the basis of heavy rent.

The old class of zemindars, to which this new class of landlords was added, also remained an unprogressive class, which beyond claiming and collecting harsh rents from their tenants took very little interest in agriculture.

The unprogressive character of the old zemindars was criticized not only by the nationalists, but also by British viceroys, statesmen and publicists, who frequently advised them, in the interest of their continued existence as a class, to relax rent burdens on tenants, to take a personal interest in agriculture and reconstruct it on a better technical and scientific basis. This advice given to them with a view to transforming them from conservative, passive, semi-feudal landlords, into active, enterprising, modern capitalist landlords did not bear fruit.

The Indian zemindar never rose to the level of his compeer in the west. He did not inaugurate scientific agriculture on his estates, did not become the pioneer of mechanization of agriculture replacing the plough, the ancient technique of Indian cultivation, with the modern tractor, thus exiling the former as the technical category of the past.

The almost exclusive interest of the Indian zemindar was to wring out maximum rents from the tenants. A number of tenancy acts had to be enacted to protect the tenant from the harsh exactions, legal and even illegal, of the zemindars. These defence measures, however, did not prove effective.

Another feature of the zemindari agriculture was that, as a rule, there developed a host of intermediaries between the cultivating tenant and the zemindars, due to the widespread practice of renting and sub-renting of land. Radhakamal Mukerjee described this process of sub-infeudation thus: 'The zemindar need not part with his estate by an absolute sale, but can raise money by allowing his proprietary right to be subdivided into smaller estates of minor values; he still retains his status and receives an annuity that leaves enough margin for his payment of government revenue. Inferior tenure holders follow the same practice, with the result that middlemen after middlemen spring up who have no interest in the improvement of the land.... There is a close similarity between the landlords' estates in Northern India and the latifundia in Italy and Spain. The estates in both cases are owned by great landlords whose sole interest in their property is in their rents. They let to one or more middlemen who make what profit they can during the term of their lease.... Many of the landlords of Bengal ... like those of Italy and Spain are absentees and attend to their property only for the purpose of receiving their rents.'[41]

'In some diistricts the sub-infeudation has grown to astonishing proportions, as many as 50 or more intermediary interests having been created between the zemindars at the top and the actual cultivator at the bottom.'[42]

As a result of this, the cultivating tenant, the last link in the chain of the graded hierarchy, bore the burden of the entire army of the non-cultivating rent receivers. It was not one Old Man of the Sea who rode the back of the peasant-Sindbad. It was an army of such Old Men whose combined rent pressure constituted an almost unbearable burden on him.

The practice of renting and sub-renting of land steadily grew also in the Ryotwari area with the land passing from the hands of the cultivating peasant proprietor to the non-cultivating owner. The new landlord leased out his holding to tenants who further sub-let it, till a chain of intermediaries was formed. The cultivating tenant who constituted the last link in that chain had to bear the burden of maintaining this host of non-cultivating rent receivers.

Thus the phenomenon of rackrenting, which was formerly confined to the zemindari areas, appeared with the growth of absentee landlordism in the Ryotwari areas also. 'Even in the Ryotwari tracts, there has been a large increase in the number of tenants and sub-tenants... 30 per cent of the lands in Bombay and Madras Provinces are not cultivated by the tenants themselves. So also in the Punjab, the number of rent receivers has increased recently from six to ten million. In the United Provinces, the rent receivers have increased by 46 per cent between 1891 and 1921 and during the same period in the Central Provinces, there was a 50 per cent increase.'[43] The problem of rackrenting, like the problems of sub-division and fragmentation of land, of overpressure on agriculture, of the declining productivity and technical backwardness of agriculture, of the heavy growth of peasant indebtedness and of the general pauperization and proletarianization of the Indian agriculturists, became, by its very universality and by its being the effect of the same causes which brought about the other results, a national problem.

Colonial Character of Indian Agriculture

While the British conquest and rule in India led the Indian agricultural economy to evolve on new lines of development, this development, due to the colonial subordinate position of India, did not proceed freely and, therefore, did not lead to a prosperous agriculture and a flourishing agrarian population.

In England, France and other free capitalist countries, with the introduction of capitalist relations in agriculture, agriculture reached higher and higher peaks of productivity and agricultural population higher and higher level of prosperity. The technical basis of agriculture became increasingly more and more mechanized, thereby raising the productivity of agricultural labour. The plough and other medieval implements of agricultural labour were increasingly supplanted by modern agricultural machinery such as tractors, threshers and harvesters. Compact farms as physical units of agriculture came into existence. The material and cultural level of agricultural population also rose higher and higher.

It is true that even in free capitalist countries, with the general decline of the capitalist economy resulting in disastrous and more frequently occurring economic crises in recent times, both agriculture and the agricultural population were affected. Still, the effects of these crises both on agricultural economy and population did not prove so ruinous as on the colonial agriculture and agricultural population of India.

In contrast to these countries, the introduction of new land relations in agriculture was not accompanied by a simultaneous and parallel growth of modern capitalist industries in India. The mass of Indian handicraftsmen ruined as a result of the influx of manufactured machine-made goods of British industries were not absorbed in any extensively developed indigenous industries. The ruined mass of these handicraftsmen, in the main, took to agriculture for subsistence. This led to overpressure on agriculture which proved one of the major obstacles to the growth of a prosperous agriculture in India. It was this overcrowding on land which primarily explained the ruinous subdivision and fragmentation of land resulting in the growth of uneconomic holdings, the deterioration of agriculture and the steady impoverishment of the agriculturists. Even after indigenous industries began to grow in India after 1850, the rate of their expansion lagged behind the rate at which the handicrafts of India were being ruined.

(The overcrowding on land with resultant subdivision and fragmentation of land brought about a steady decline in the income of the broad strata of the agricultural population. The action of the frequently occurring agrarian crises, the vicissitudes of the world market, and the exploitation of the agriculturists by the merchant middlemen on whom they were dependent for the sale of their products and who took full advantage of their economic helplessness and ignorance, further reduced their income. They were being impoverished at a rapidly rising rate.

Unable to pay land revenue which was excessive and compelled to purchase articles of primary necessity which were heavily taxed by the government, the mass of agriculturists were driven more and more to borrow from moneylenders or co-operatives. The moneylenders extorted high interest from the agriculturists who, in course of time, were not only unable to repay the debt but even to pay interest regularly on that debt. This indebtedness of the overwhelming majoritiy of the agricultural population reached monstrous proportions. It further accentuated their poverty.

The process of impoverishment which enveloped more and more strata of agricultural population disastrously affected agriculture. The impoverished agriculturist could not renew his livestock or properly manure the field. He and his family lost physical energy due to malnutrition and thereby capacity for labour on the field. Thus, agriculture stagnated, in fact, deteriorated. The yield per acre steadily diminished.

With the increasing impoverishment and resultant indebtedness of the ever increasing strata of the agriculturists, land rapidly passed into the hands of rich landlords, merchants and moneylenders. This led to the growth of a new landlord class in addition to the class of zemindars created by the British rule in an earlier period. This new class of absentee landlords had no vital interest in land. They did not introduce any technical improvement in agriculture. On the other hand, taking advantage of the extreme land hunger rampant among the peasantry, they rented the land to tenants who frequently sub-rented it to sub-tenants. Thus a hierarchy grew among the agricultural population. The actually cultivating subtenant who was the last link in the chain had to carry the entire heavy load of non-cultivating landlords, tenants and sub-tenants over him. This renting and sub-renting of land also further accentuated the sub-division of land and its fragmentation, making the holdings more and more uneconomic.

The passing of the land from the hands of the peasant proprietors into the hands of non-cultivating landlords brought about, increasing polarization of classes in agrarian areas. At one pole of the agrarian population the class of non-cultivating landlords grew increasingly; at the other, the rapidly swelling class of agricultural proletariat as well as of the poorest peasants and sub-tenants who were hardly distinguishable from land labourers.

Thus the class of landless peasants and that of non-cultivating rent receivers continuously increased. Property in land accumulated at one pole of agrariain society and landlessness and extreme poverty at the other. This tendency grew alarmingly after 1914. Radhakamal Mukerjee remarked: 'So long as there is no radical change in the rural economy of India through land adjustments, agricultural co-operation or scientific farming, the problem of the landless peasants will become more and more acute and there will be a tendency for this class to come in line with the industrial proletariat of the cities. That will portend social upheavals.'[44]

Thus the introduction of new land relations in agriculture in the conditions of the subordinate colonial position of India, did not result in any modernization and mechanization of agriculture nor did it bring, even for a period, prosperity to the mass of the agricultural population. While social relations in agriculture changed from village ownership or possession of land into private property in land, the technical basis of agriculture remained the same.

The colonial Indian peasant working with the primitive plough and on an uneconomic holding, had to compete in the Indian and world market with powerful agrarian capitalist trusts or prosperous capitalist farmers of free countries like England, France, the U.S.A. and Australia, which produced on large estates or extensive farms and with modern machinery. As a result of this whenever the cyclone of agrarian crises broke out, the colonial Indian peasant was unable to withstand its devastating force. He sank into greater and greater impoverishment and the resultant indebtedness.

Since the Indian people were not politically independent, they could not formulate and put into action independent economic policies such as would aid the free development of

Indian economy, its industry, commerce and agriculture. The development of Indian agriculture was adjusted to the economic necessities of British capitalism which required India primarily as an agrarian colony for the production of raw materials for British industries. This prevented the independent development of Indian agriculture, fulfilling the economic requirements of the Indian people. Indian agriculture remained, therefore, distorted in its development—'lop-sided'.

In spite of this, it must be recognized that, by bringing the village agricultural production within the sphere of Indian and world markets, by making agriculture an organic part of Indian economy, the British rule over India elevated Indian agriculture to the status of a national agriculture. This was a progressive aspect of the British conquest.

Since Indian agriculture became national in character, its problems also assumed national significance. Previously, in the period of the self-sufficient villages, agriculture was a part of the self-sufficient village economy. Problems connected with it were problems of the autarchic economy of the village, primarily affecting the village community only and not the population outside the village. It is true that the state was dependent for land revenue on village agriculture but, so far as the general population was concerned, it was not dependent on the agriculture of the particular village. The population of every village depended mainly on the agricultural produce of its own village and not on that of other villages. Every town had a group of villages in its periphery which provided its agricultural needs. Hence every village had its own independent problem connected with agriculture.

After the elevation of Indian agriculture to the level of national agriculture, the problems of agriculture assumed a national character. The state of agriculture of a particular village or district affected the rest of the country since the agriculture in a particular centre produced not only for that centre but for the entire country and even for the world. Hence, such problems as the decline of agriculture, the deterioration of livestock, the poverty and indebtedness of the peasantry, subdivision and fragmentation of land, became national problems. Not only that the agricultural population of India felt in this their common problems arising out of the same causes such as absentee landlordism, excessive land revenue, lack of sufficient industrialization of India, etc. but even classes associated with modern industries in India considered these problems as their own. The state of agriculture and the condition of the agriculturists affected the state of industry and the economic position of non-agricultural classes also. Thus the problems of agriculture and the conditions of the agriculturists all became national problems.

Since the problems of Indian agriculture became national and were conditioned by the same causes, these problems served as focal points for the mobilization of the people and its different sections on a national scale. Every party representing the interests of a particular social group had its own programme and policy for the reconstruction of national agriculture corresponding with the interests of that group. The conflict of interests between different classes, even between various sections of the agricultural population itself such as landlords, peasant proprietors, tenants, and land labourers, made different programmes and policies of different classes divergent. Still the significant fact remained that all these different and often even antagonistic programmes and policies referred to and revolved round the problem of national agriculture, an integral part of the Indian national economy.

Reconstruction of Agriculture, Its Pre-requisites

The restoration and reconstruction, on a prosperous basis, of Indian agriculture and improvement of the material standards of the agricultural population, became the common objective of all those numerous programmes and policies.

Since it was Great Britain which created the new agrarian system in India and determined the political and economic policies affecting Indian agriculture, all movements of various classes for the restoration and reconstruction of Indian agriculture were designed to exert pressure on the British government to bring about this restoration and reconstruction. Since the British government was not a national but a foreign government, these movements assumed a national complexion. Thus various sections of the people who pressed on the British government to introduce reform or revolution in the sphere of agriculture, felt inspired with a national sentiment since this pressure was exerted on a foreign government. Thus national agriculture built up by the British conquest and rule in India brought about a common material interest in agriculture among the Indian people. This paved way for the growth of a national sentiment among them to strive for a prosperous national agriculture.

The problem of the reconstruction of Indian agriculture and its further development as also of the transformation of the agrarian population into a prosperous community was a stupendous one. Its solution demanded a comprehensive plan which had to be an integral part of a planned national economy, since no single sector of Indian economy could advance without a general advance of the entire economy. 'The planning of agricultural production must be correlated to a planning of industrial production, and these two again can be successful only if they rest upon the foundation of a planned currency and credit organization.'[45]

Since the existing land relations and heavy mass indebtedness were two of the principal causes of the impoverishment of the agricultural population and resultant degeneration of agriculture, the programme of planned national agriculture required to embody vital items like radical revision of existing property relations in land and cancellation of debts. Such a programme could be carried through only by overcoming the most stubborn resistance of landlords, moneylenders and other groups of vested interests like the Indian bourgeoisie who had interests in land also. Therefore, sporadic and partial measures, which had been adopted, did not and could not yield any really tangible results. 'The debt of the cultivating classes is but the symptom of a deeply rooted disease... Legislation scaling down the debt or restricting the activities of the moneylenders will not cure the disease.'[56]

And, further, 'Not until the ryots are enabled to start on a clean slate by measures like wholesale cancellation of existing debts and get security with regard to agricultural operations ... by a many-sided and simultaneous attack on all the factors connected with their poverty, can here be a reasonable hope of better and more prosperous condition of Indian agriculture.'[47]

The same authors remark: 'If instead of resorting to measures of a tinkering and halting character, we consider the possibility of a redistribution of land with consolidated holdings and co-operative large-scale production, such measures may have revolutionary implications, involving a prolonged struggle with vested interests, ranging from the moneylenders to the feudatory and absentee landlords.... The choice lies between drastic and radical measures planned with a view to bringing about reconstruction of our social and economic organization, or a continuance of the present planless drift, with sporadic attempts at halting reforms which may end in a grave agricultural crisis followed by a violent revolution.'[48]

A national plan of agricultural reconstruction, having, as its objective, free development of agriculture from the standpoint of the general economic advance and needs of the Indian people, required. as an indispensable prerequisite political power in the hands of the Indian people. Thus the fulfilment of a programme of a planned and prosperous national agriculture presupposed as a prerequisite a real national government which would reflect the will, the interests and the needs of the mass of the Indian people, and not those of vested interests, foreign or indigenous.

It must also be recognized that such a colossal task as the reconstruction of the entire agrarian economy implying a planned mobilization and use of all available physical, technical and human resources of the vast sub-continent of India could not be realized by private enterprises, capitalist or individual. Only the state could accomplish it. The plan would also imply the elimination of profit motive and competition from the sphere of agricultural production and had to be based on the principle of co-operation and production from the standpoint of the needs of the Indian people and general advance of Indian economy. 'The type of agricultural organization we are visualizing is an organization based on the state regulation of production in the general interests of our people and the conversion of agricultural production into a public utility service.'[49]

It is obvious that only a real national government of the Indian people (and not of the Indian or foreign vested interests) could put such a plan into successful action.

Thus the restoration and further develolpment of Indian agriculture was not a mere 'techno-economic' problem. Basically, it was a socio-economic and 'political' problem. It was bound up with rapid and free all-round development of Indian industries which not only could absorb surplus population in the countryside but could also provide agricultural machinery for the modernization and mechanization of Indian agriculture. It also was bound up with the problem of the overhauling of the existing property relations in land. It further raised the problem of political power, of the establishment of an independent sovereign state of the Indian people where power lay in the hands of the producing and exploited strata of the people themselves and not in those of Indian vested interests.

Thus bound up with the problem of freedom and a socio-economic reconstruction of Indian society on a historically higher level, the problem of agricultural reconstruction had a progressive national character.

References

1 Refer Shelvankar, pp. 106-7.
2 Refer Wadia and Merchant, p. 167.
3 ibid., p. 85.
4 ibid., p. 87.
5 Quoted by Ahmad, p. 1.
6 Ahmad, p. 1.
7 ibid., p. 3.
8 Congress Agrarian Inquiry Committee Report, p. 28.
9 Refer Radhakamal Mookerjee, Mann, Brijnarayan, Ranga.
10 Radhakamal Mookerjee, p. 196.
11 R. P. Dutt, p. 184.
12 Ahmad, pp. 2-3.
13 Visvesvaraya quoted by Ahmad, p. 8.
14 Refer Report of the Commission of 1892.
15 Quoted by R. P. Dutt, p. 228.
16 R. P. Dutt, p. 227.
17 Refer R. P. Dutt, p. 205.
18 Radhakamal Mookerjee, p. 206.
19 ibid., p. 345.
20 Report of the Indian Statutory Commission, 1930, Vol. I.
21 Sitaramayya, p. 62.
22 The Famine Commission Report, 1880.
23 Refer Sir Edward Maclagan, M. L. Darling. The Central Banking Inquiry Committee, P. J. Thomas, Agricultural Credit Department and others.
24 Refer Wadia and Merchant, p. 185.
25 Ahmad, pp. 26-7.
26 ibid., p. 27.
27 ibid., p. 27.
28 Refer Reports of Provincial Banking Inquiry Committees.

29 Quoted by R. P. Dutt, p. 235.
30 Royal Commission on Agriculture, pp. 433-4.
31 The Deccan Riots Commission, Bengal Provincial Committee Report, Report of the Committee on Co-operation in Madras.
32 Refer R. P. Dutt, p. 216.
33 Quoted from Wadia and Merchant, p. 249.
34 ibid., p. 249.
35 Refer Sarkar in *Indian Journal of Economics*, July 1939, pp. 94-6.
36 Refer Dinkar Desai, 'Agrarian Serfdom in India' in *Indian Sociologist*, July 1942.
37 J. M. Mehta, p. 125.
38 Refer Royal Commission on Labour, R. P. Dutt and Shiva Rao.
39 Report of the Madras Banking Inquiry Committee, 1930.
40 Refer Floud Commission Report, p. 37.
41 Radhakamal Mookerjee, p. 90.
42 Simon Commission Report, Vol. I, p. 340.
43 Wadia and Merchant, p. 239.
44 Quoted in Congress Agrarian Inquiry Committee Report, p. 23
45 Wadia and Merchant, p. 271.
46 ibid., p. 195.
47 ibid., pp. 195-6.
48 ibid., p. 182.
49 ibid., p. 270.

CHAPTER V

DECLINE OF TOWN HANDICRAFTS

Effect of British Rule on Town Handicrafts

The effect of the British rule on the town handicrafts is, very succinctly summarized by D. R. Gadgil in the following words: 'The only dramatic event in this economic transition is perhaps, the decline of the old handicrafts. The collapse of these was indeed sudden and complete.'[1] He further remarks: 'The causes working towards this result were very numerous. But the most important of these were (1) The disappearance of the native Indian courts; (2) the establishment of an alien rule, with the influx of the many foreign influences that such a change in the nature of government meant; (3) the competition of a more highly developed form of industry.'[2]

We shall now survey this 'sudden and complete, collapse of the town handicrafts in India under the British rule in detail.

Disappearance of States, Patrons of Town Handicrafts

The conquest of India by the East India Company resulted in the disappearance of native rulers in rapid succession. State after state vanished, their place being taken by the new forms of rule and administration evolved by the East India Company. Even the territory where native rulers were not ousted came under the indirect political domination of the British. This disappearance and decline of states had a direct and immediate effect on the town handicrafts of India. As observed, the states were the biggest customers of the town handicraft products. Further, they, in many cases, maintained large manufactories and workshops and employed some of the best craftsmen. Hence their disappearance and decline, 'struck the first blow at Indian handicrafts by steadily curtailing the demand for their products. The immediate effect of this was the stoppage of the production of the highest class of goods such as would be required only by the princes and the highest nobles on a big State occasion. The ordinary demand did continue for some time even after this disappearance of the courts, but it invariably had a tendency to diminish steadily.'[3]

The disappearance of the states also affected the industries which supplied the goods needed for the military and other purposes of these states. To take an instance, the production of military weapons like swords, spears, deggers, shields and other varieties of arms made of iron and steel, and the accompanying artistic industries like enamelling and damascening work had reached a high state of development in pre-British India. The disappearance of the states had a very ruinous effect on these industries.

Foreign Rule, its Disastrous Effects on Town Handicrafts

We shall now survey the effects of the establishment of the foreign rule along with foreign influences on the manufactures of India.

The East India Company, from 1600 to 1757, was essentially a trading corporation which carried on trade in India under the patronage and with the permission of the Indian kings, and sometimes even in defiance of them. However, it was essentially a trading company which brought goods or bullion from foreign countries to exchange them for the luxury articles from India such as spices, textiles, and others. During this period the export trade of manufactured articles in India increased.

> "The end of the seventeenth century marks the highest point in the export of silk and cotton goods. It was an extremely profitable business for the company, and in 1672 "several artificers such as throwsters, weavers, and dyers were sent over by the Company with great quantities of English patterns, to teach Indian weavers new methods of manufacturing goods suitable to English and European markets".'[4]

Thus the export trade of India increased during the period when the East India Company was a trading concern, and when it struggled to open markets for the Indian goods in England and other countries. During this period, the British government, perturbed by the flow of Indian goods into England, had to pass laws such as would make the sale of Indian goods in England difficult.[5]

The victory of Plassey placed the East India Company in a favourable position in India. It thereby secured the weapon of political power which could be used to create facilities for pushing its trade, to dictate its own terms to artisans and manufacturers, to get commodities at a cheaper price, to monopolize these handicraftsmen, to force its imported goods on the people of India, and also to oust rival traders, both foreign and indigenous, by political measures with a view to maintaining its monopoly position.

Between 1757 and 1857, the East India Company expanded its control over more and more territory in India, eliminated a number of states and drained enormous wealth from India, which, though called 'Plunder' by the critics of the East India Company, became the necessary capital ('primitive accumulation') for carrying through the Industrial Revolution in England. In his work entitled *The Law of Civilization and Decay* Brooks Adams elucidates this point very succinctly:

> 'Plassey was fought in 1757 and probably nothing has ever equalled the rapidity of the change which followed. In 1760 the flying shuttle appeared and coal began to replace wood in smelting. In 1764 Hargreaves invented the spinning jenny, in 1776 Crompton contrived the mule, in 1785 Cartwright patented the powerloom, and, chief of all, in 1768 Watt matured the steam engine, the most perfect of all vents of centralizing energy. But though these machines served as outlets for the accelerating movement of the time, they did not cause that acceleration. In themselves inventions are passive, many of the most important having lain dormant for centuries, waiting for a sufficient store of force to have accumulated to set them working. That store must always take the shape of money, and money not hoarded, but in motion. Before the influx of the Indian treasure, and the expansion of credit which followed, no force sufficient for this purpose existed; and had Watt lived fifty years earlier, he and his invention must have perished together. Possibly, since the world began, no investment has ever yielded the profit reaped from the Indian plunder, because for nearly fifty years Great Britain stood without a competitor. From 1694 to Plassey (1757) the growth has been relatively slow. Between

1760 to 1815 the growth was very rapid and prodigious.'[6]

The Industrial Revolution, thus brought about, created a powerful industrial and manufacturing class in England. This class increasingly got control of state power in Britain which it used to deprive, in course of time, the East India Company of its monopoly of the Eastern trade and also to compel it to adopt economic and political measures as would serve the economic needs of the British industries. After a stubborn struggle, industrial capital scored a political victory over trading capital in Britain.

It was during this period of the increasing strength of the industrial class in England that Indian handicrafts received a powerful blow and rapidly declined. We shall study the various factors which brought about this ruination.

The blow to the export trade of India with Britain came from the various measures adopted by the government preventing Indian goods from flooding the English market, and, thereby, giving protection to the rising English manufactures which still could not compete with Indian goods. As Horace Wilson vividly describes it: 'The history of the trade of cotton cloths with India...is...a melancholy instance of the wrong done to India by the country on which she had become dependent.... Had no such prohibitory duties and decrees existed, the mills of Paisley and Manchester would have been stopped at their outset, and could scarcely have been again set in motion, even by the power of steam. They were created by the sacrifice of the Indian manufacture. Had India been independent, she would have retaliated.... This act of self-defence was not permitted her; she was at the mercy of the stranger. British goods were forced upon her without paying any duty, and the foreign manufacturer employed the arm of political injustice to keep down and ultimately strangle a competitor with whom he could not have contended on equal terms.'[7]

B. D. Basu in his well-known work *Ruin of Indian Trade and Industries* gives a detailed table of the heavy duties imposed on different goods imported into England from India, which very clearly reveals how the export trade of India was deliberately thwarted by the British government to foster its own industries and supply them with a home market.[8]

However, foreign countries were a minor market for the products of Indian handicrafts. The major market was India itself.[9] It is here that the foreign influences and the foreign rule had a very disastrous effect.

Reasons for Their Ruination

The rule of the East India Company proved disastrous to the handicraft industry in India for a number of reasons. The first reason was that it destroyed the native states, which were the greatest customers and patrons of this industry. Secondly, the East India Company, which was the successor of these States, could have given impetus to the industries, but, being a foreign company under the control and direction of a foreign power, it adopted measures under the pressure of the British government which proved detrimental to the manufacturing interests of India. Thirdly, being a trading company, it wanted to produce things cheaply and sell them profitably in other market. The heavy duties levied on Indian goods in England further necessitated the lowering of the cost of the goods which it bought to maintain the level of profit. To attain this purpose, it monopolized weavers and other handicraftsmen, and compelled them to produce things at a stipulated price. Having also political power, it could bring political pressure on them to submit to its demands. The Company prevented handicraftsmen from selling their products to Indian or other foreign merchants at a higher price thus reducing them to the position of virtual slaves. Fourthly, it imposed customs and adopted transit measures in India which created such unfavourable conditions for the Indian merchants that they could not carry on internal trade effectively. These measures, designed to oust all rival traders and to acquire monopoly trade control over the Indian market, by stopping the Indian merchants from carrying on internal trade, crippled the market for Indian handicraft products. Further, by 1813, the industrial classes had become politically powerful in England. The Charter of 1813 destroyed the monopoly of trade of the East India Company and opened India for Free Trade to all merchants of England. These merchants were of a different category from the merchants who came during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This class of merchants did not come to India to buy manufactured goods produced in India but to secure a market for the manufactured goods produced in the mills of England, and to secure raw materials from India to supply those mills. From 1814 onwards, the policy of the East India Company government, which had now mainly become a political instrument of the industrial classes of England, was to adopt measures which would facilitate the import and the export of Indian raw materials to Britain required by the British industries. Further, the establishment of the British rule in India and the new type of government which it set up, created 'the new types of wealthy Indians the businessmen, the Europeanized officials, the successful moneylenders'[10] who had different tastes, and who did not patronize the very elaborate Oriental work, much of which was only suitable for a feudal method of living'[11] and hence not suited to their new way of living.

We shall now see how these multifold reasons gave a mortal blow to the town industries.

To counteract the effects of the heavy duties which were imposed on the goods imported into England by the East India Company and also to get the goods as cheap as possible, the merchants of the Company used very harsh measures against the handicraftsmen.[12]

The oppressive methods adopted by the agents and merchants of the Company, assisted by the regulations passed by it like the Act of 1793 in Bengal, had a very disastrous effect on the life of the handicraftsmen and the condition of their work. Thousands of families of weavers began to abandon their profession. Bolts mentions 'Above seven hundred families of weavers, in the districts round Jungalbarry, at once abandoned their country and their professions on account of oppressions of this nature'.[13]

Thus the new rulers who replaced the native states reduced the handicraftsmen almost to a condition of slavery and put obstacles in the way of a free existence of the industry. As a result of this, the industry suffered both in extent and efficiency, and a growing number of families of the towns handicraftsmen started abandoning their profession.

The iniquitous system of transit duties and customs within the country and the various coercive methods that were adopted by the customs officers have been vividly set forth by Sir Charles Trevelyan in his famous *Report on Transit Duties*. 'No less than two hundred and thirty-five articles of personal and domestic use were subject to inland duties.'[14]

Further, the various measures adopted to subserve the needs of the rising British industries disastrously affected a number of other Indian industries also

The Indian shipping industry was disastrously affected by the decision of the Court of Directors to use only British ships and prohibit Indian ships for the purpose of trade. There were also other reasons for its crippling.[15]

The Indian paper industry also was undermined during this period due to the policy of the British rulers to purchase only British-made paper for use in India. The order passed by Sir Charles Wood which made it obligatory for the British government in India to use only British-made paper deprived the Indian paper industry of its greatest patron.

Regarding the ruination of another important industry, Gadgil remarks: 'In one peculiar case, British rule effectively killed a handicraft. This was the damascening and inlaying of arms, weapons and shields, which...was...common all along the north-west portions of India—in Cutch, in Sindh, in the Punjab. By removing the necessity for, and by an active prohibition of, the use and possession of arms, the British succeeded in reducing this industry to the state of being confined to produce ornamental knick-knacks for European tourists and others.'[16]

The iron smelting industries were also seriously undermined. The principal reasons which accomplished their ruin were the elimination or decline of the Indian states, the chief customer of these industries; the prohibitory duties imposed on the import of their products into England by the British government and the preference of British iron products by the new government required for its purposes.

Further, 'An unwise tariff and the discovery of Chili nitrates gave a serious shock to the saltpetre industry; the iron smelting industry was suffering from the great rise in the price of charcoal due to the reservation of forests and the extension of railways—and the competition of imported pig iron.'[17]

Thus, industry after industry began to collapse during this period on account of a series of measures adopted by the foreign government to suit the requirements of the British industries.

B. D. Basu enumerates the principal among these measures as follows:

> 'From the time England acquired political power in India, she destroyed Indian industries principally by means of:
>
> (1) The forcing of British Free Trade on India.
> (2) Imposing heavy duties on Indian manufactures in England.
> (3) The export of raw products from India.
> (4) The transit and Customs duties.
> (5) Granting special privileges to the British in India.
> (6) Building railways in India.
> (7) Compelling Indian artisans to divulge their trade secrets.
> (8) Holding of exhibitions.'[18]

Another factor which affected the handicrafts in India was the attitude of the new wealthy classes which evolved on the basis of the establishment of the British rule in India.

> 'The next class which was the natural successor to the position of the nobles was the newly created educated class. This was mostly an urban and professional class, somewhat corresponding to the professional section of the "bourgeoisie" of the west. This new class might have been expected to patronize the handicrafts. Indeed, with a few exceptions, they entirely turned their back on indigenous arts. One of the most harmful effects of a foreign rule is the imposition on the conquered peoples of the ideals of the conquerors; and the newly created Indian "bourgeoisie" showed itself during the latter half of the last century extremely ready to accept European standards and to pour scorn on everything Indian... To follow European fashions was considered the hall-mark of enlightenment. Consequently the products of indigenous industries suffered... It was perhaps natural for this class to act as it did; it was itself entirely a product of British rule. But, in a number of cases, their tastes were almost forcibly fixed for them by some stupid rule or convention of European officials or by the fear of incurring their displeasure.'[19]

Thus deprived of foreign markets, deprived of home markets in the form of states, nobility, and wealthy strata of society, also hampered by the conscious and unconscious acts of the foreign government which replaced the old states, and discouraged, and even often repudiated by the new wealthy classes which replaced the old nobility and wealthy urban classes of the old states, the handicraft industries declined and almost collapsed. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the handicraft industries had been almost ruined. The railways, which began to develop in the forties, enabled the British manufactured goods to penetrate to the remotest corners of the land thereby establishing the permanent dominance of British goods in the Indian market.

Such was the tragic fate of the highly organized handicraft industries of India which had existed and thrived for centuries, which had spread the fame of India throughout the world, which had evoked the admiration and jealousy of other peoples from ancient times, from the Egyptians, the Persians, the Chinese, the Greeks, the Romans, the Arabs, and the Europeans, which had made India known as 'Gorgeous Ind' for epoches. Today they exist in the form of a relic of the past, a specimen of curiosity, mostly in the museum. Their memory has mainly survived in the counterfeit copies which are still produced in some places like Agra, Benares, Ahmedabad, Surat, or some cities in Rajputana, by the descendants of the old handicraftsmen, who, finding no other source of employment, stick to their old trades, eking out their existence from day to day generally working under horrible sweating conditions in karkhanas owned by small capitalists. The decline of the handicraft industry was nearly complete by 1880.

As D. R. Gadgil puts it: 'India in the eighties afforded the spectacle of a huge country with decaying handicrafts, with any other form of organized industry almost non-existent and a consequent falling back upon the land.'[20]

This is the history of the decline and decay of Indian handicrafts under the British rule. These handicrafts, once the pride and glory of India, could not withstand the pressure of political and above all historico-economic forces and succumbed to this pressure.

Decline of Indian Town Handicrafts

In England and other capitalist European countries, handicraft industries began to lose ground with the rise of modern manufacture and machine-based industry. By the law of economic selection, the latter methods of production progressively ousted the former due to the working of the most fundamental law of economics, namely, that the industrial technique, which is more labour-saving, finally routs that which is less labour-saving since its products are cheaper than those of the latter. Thus handicrafts, all over the world, gave way to the rising tide of modern industry.)

In England and other European countries, however, there were indigenous modern industries which vanquished and crushed indigenous handicrafts. The ruined mass of handicraftsmen was, on the whole, absorbed in the new indigenous modern industries.

In India, the decline and decay of native handicrafts was not accomplished by any rise of indigenous manufacture or machine industry. The political pressure of a foreign government together with the influx of the cheap products of foreign machine industry were the principal causes of this decline and decay.

Since the ruin of the Indian handicrafts was brought about by foreign industries and not by any indigenous industries, the mass of economically ruined handicraftsmen had no new industrial means of livelihood. Even after 1850, when modern industries steadily grew in India, they could not grow with sufficient rapidity so as to incorporate the ever increasing number of ruined handicraftsmen. The result was that while a fraction of the latter was absorbed in the new industries, by far the larger proportion of it took to the land as a means of livelihood. They became farmers, tenants, but mostly land labourers.[21] There was also a diminishing section of these handicraftsmen who desperately stuck to their fast decaying industries and strove to eke out a precarious existence from them. In the conditions of dependence on the market for the disposal of their products, they fell more and more into the economic grip of the merchant class whose exploitation of them ever grew in intensity.

The destruction of urban handicrafts, without the parallel growth of substitute modern industries, led to the disequilibrium of industry and agriculture in India. It brought about an overpressure on agriculture which was both disastrous for the economic condition of those living on the land as also for the efficiency of agriculture. The general economic policy of Britain, while it accomplished the destruction of the old handicrafts of India, did not aid the free development of modern industries in the country lest these industries should menace the British industries in the market. This mainly brought about the lack of balance between the agricultural and industrial parts of Indian economy. (See Chapter VII 'Rise of Modern Industries'). The second reason why Britain desired and strove to keep India predominantly agrarian was that it required the cheap agricultural raw materials of India for her industries. This made India, mainly, a colonial agrarian appendage of Britain.

While recognizing the high degree of development of the Indian handicrafts, we should not loose sight of their limitations. First, these urban handicrafts produced articles which primarily catered for the luxurious tastes of a limited aristocratic and wealthy mercantile stratum of medieval society or the military needs of the state or the specific requirements of ecclesiastical groups and institutions or pilgrims periodically visiting religious centres. The urban handicrafts did not produce to meet the primary daily needs of the common people. This significant fact restricted the volume of their production as well as their market.[22] Even when it exported their costly products to foreign countries, it was mainly the wealthy layers of society in foreign lands which were their customers. This limitation of markets was a fetter on extensive development of the urban industries, which was possible only if industries produced primarily for the daily needs of the common people. Further, the industrial economic unification of a country could take place only when industries produced goods on a mass scale for the elementary needs of the common people.

The primary daily needs of the overwhelming portion of the Indian people distributed in numerous self-sufficient village centres were met by mainly locally produced and locally consumed products of village artisan industries. In towns, artisan industries producing on a vast scale to meet the basic economic requirements of the people as a whole, the country was not economically integrated. Every village was almost an independent producing and consuming centre. Exchange in articles of daily and primary use was not much developed.

Historical Significance of Decline

The decline and decay of the urban handicrafts and the capture of their market by the cheap products of modern foreign and subsequently also Indian industries, along with the crippling of the village artisan industry, steadily transformed India into an industrial market for these goods. The exchange spread from village to village, between villages and towns, between India as a whole and the outside world and was not merely restricted to the class of luxury goods or goods of military importance but extended to articles of daily human consumption. Exhange relations enveloped and permeated the entire Indian society. This contributed to the economic unification of India.

It is true that the destruction of urban handicrafts involved untold misery for the operators of these industries, specially because no parallel and sufficient industrial development took place in India itself which could provide work for the ruined handicraftsmen. It is true that this caused a suffocating over-pressure on India's agriculture resulting in the steady impoverishment of the rural population. But while feeling sad about these agonies of the people and the ruin of old industries, we should recognize the vital historical fact that the destruction of the pre-capitalist urban handicrafts and the village artisan industry of India brought about by the forces of modern industries and trade, made way for the transformation of India into a single economic whole. It objectively unified the entire people — and not a section — within the web of a system of exchange relations. It thus contributed to the building of the material basis for the growth of a common and joint economic existence for the Indian people, for the economic integration of the Indian people into a nation.

The mass of ruined handicraftsmen, in part, took to modern Indian industries, and became factory and transport workers, but, in the absence of sufficient growth of these industries, in the main, took to agriculture and became tenants or land labourers. They had rarely sufficient capital to purchase land and become free peasant proprietors. Thus the class of Indian handicraftsmen, a class based on medieval handicrafts, steadily dissolved itself into and increased the class of the modern proletariat, of tenants and land labourers. They became integral parts of the new classes in India which arose on the basis of the new capitalist economic relations which developed in India during the British rule. They became a part of the capitalist socio-economic structure of Indian society however insufficiently developed. They became parts of the new classes which were nationally unified and had to confront problems which transcended a mere town but were national in scope. The new class of land labourers or industrial workers or tenants or peasant proprietors had a community of interests and common problems which could not exist among Indian handicraftsmen in pre-British India. The ruined handicraftsmen now achieved the status of being members of classes which were component parts of the Indian nation and existed as national units with common interests and problems. This was a distinct historical advance.

References

1 Gadgil, p. vi.
2 ibid., p. 37.
3 ibid., p. 38.
4 Thompson and Garratt, pp. 431-2.
5 Refer Lecky.
6 Brooks Adams, pp. 263-4.
7 Quoted by Mill, p. 385.
8 Refer Major Basu.
9 Refer Gadgil and Buchanan.
10 Thompson and Garratt, pp. 434-5.
11 ibid., p. 434.
12 Refer Basu, pp. 85-7.
13 Bolts, p. 195.
14 Ramachandra Rao, p. 99.
15 Refer A. Mehta.
16 Gadgil, p. 41.
17 ibid., p. 45.
18 Basu, pp. 10-11.
19 Gadgil, pp. 40-1.
20 ibid., pp. 43-4.
21 Refer Gadgil.
22 Refer Gadgil and Buchanan.

CHAPTER VI

DECLINE OF VILLAGE ARTISAN INDUSTRIES

Pre-British Village Artisan Industries

As seen in a former chapter, village artisan industries constituted the industrial part of the balanced and predominantly self-sufficient village economy of the pre-British village providing almost all its industrial requirements. It was the industrial pillar of the economic autarchy of the village, the other pillar being the self-sufficient village agriculture. Further, the division of labour had not reached an advanced stage as is seen from the fact that most of the artisans were part-time cultivators, cultivating the patch of land assigned to them by the village just as the cultivators — especially their women-folk — spent some time in industrial activity such as spinning.[1]

A particular feature of the village economic relations was that the artisans (except perhaps the weaver) had more the status of the servants of the village community which assigned them a part of the village land and a portion of the annual agricultural produce, than that of free producers exchanging their products and services among themselves or with cultivators.[2]

Within the artisan industry itself, there was very limited division of labour and very little specialization, thus keeping the artisan's technical skill at a low level. External competition also was absent since the village was almost an independent economic unit. This not only led to the absence of incentive to the artisan to improve technique and skill but also prevented the growth of localization of industry in India.[3]

Causes of Their Decline

The influx of cheap British and non-British machine-made goods into India was the fundamental cause of the decline of village artisan industry. The introduction of railways and, later of buses, made it easy for goods to reach the villages. 'The railways and steamships have made it possible for European power manufacturers to offer the Indian farmers much better terms than the Indian village craftsmen could give. Self-sufficing local economy has been displaced by international specialization and trade, much to the discomfiture of the Indian craftsman.'[4]

The steady growth of modern industries in India itself, during the second half of the nineteenth century and thereafter, accelerated this decline. A brief survey of the process of this decline is made next.

Their Decline, an Uneven Process

The process of the decline of village handicrafts, though universal, was, due to social, economic and local reasons, uneven.

The handloom industry in the villages was adversely affected by the influx of cheap machine-made cloth and rapidly declined after 1850. Subsequently the decline was partly though not effectively retarded by propaganda in its favour, by Indian leaders such as Gandhi and organizations like the All-India Spinners' Association. The factories, however, utilized the popularization of the use of khaddar and put into the market mill-made khaddar which obstructed the spread of this type of cloth.

"Yet on account of the great relative economy of the factory method, hand spinning has little chance in competition and hand weaving is endangered....Like the handloom workers in India have suffered greatly from lower prices of factory-made goods, both from abroad and from Indian mills."[5]

The economic position of the village carpenter deteriorated in proportion to the introduction of machinery in rural production. The adoption of such new devices as the iron plough and the iron cane-crushing machine seriously affected him. A section of the ruined carpenters were incorporated in the furniture making and such other industries which sprang up in the towns.

The new economic environment had, however, a minimum effect on the position of the village blacksmith. The demand for the repair work which he performed in the village did not diminish to any tangible extent. A section of the village blacksmiths, however, migrated to the towns and was employed in modern engineering workshops, in iron foundries and such other enterprises.[6]

The village tanner was, perhaps, the worst sufferer from the economic transformation of the countryside. In the pre-British period, he got carcasses of animals gratis from his fellow villagers. After India was linked with the world market and tanning industries developed in India, the owners of dead animals found it very profitable to sell the hides to the representatives of these industries, Indian and foreign.[7] While the new town tanning industries absorbed a small section of the ruined village tanners, a big proportion of them were constrained to be land labourers.

The import of cheap aniline dyes seriously affected the village dyeing industry and almost ruined the village dyer. By the end of the ninenteenth century, this village artisan industry was irretrievably damaged.[8]

The increasing substitution of kerosene in place of oil for lighting purposes by the villagers seriously affected the village oilman. The growth of the oil-pressing industries in towns which produced oil for culinary purposes, however, had no tangible effect on his trade.

The increased use of enamelled ware imported from foreign countries and metal ware produced by the growing brass and such other industries in India, by the upper strata of the village population, contracted the demand for the goods produced by the village potter. However, since the poor strata of the village continued mainly to use earthenware, he was not quite ruined.[9] Since an economically stranded village potter could not be incorporated into any urban industry, generally he became an agricultural worker.

The various famines which broke out also contributed to the decline of village artisan industries. During the period of famine, poor artisans, specially weavers, were constrained to seek relief by taking to other forms of work. While blackmiths or carpenters could sometimes get work, artisans like weavers had to resort to manual labour. It was often difficult for them to rehabilitate their craft skill after the crisis was over. 'In the absence of extraneous aid, many weavers are obliged under the stress of the famine to fall off from their own trade; of these a considerable number never return to it, but sink into and swell the ranks of ordinary labourers.'[10]

Some of the artisan industries persisted due to the proverty of the rural population. For instance, the village potter still commanded customers because the major portion of the population was too poor to buy metal or enamelled ware and big pottery industry existed in the country.

The tendency of all village industries was, however, towards decline.

Surviving Village Artisans, Their Changed Status

There arose a special difference in the conditions in which the village artisans now worked and in those in which they formerly worked. While formerly they were almost servants of the village community getting for their services and goods free land and a fixed amount of grain at the harvest time, now predominantly, though not exclusively, they worked on a cash basis and had independent economic relations with the members of the village. The transition from the old to the new method had been slow and not always completed. Still 'the point to be emphasized is that almost everywhere the tendency was for the regular income of the artisan from the dues and the perquisites, etc. to diminish steadily in importance.'[11]

Another aspect of the change in the status of the artisan was that he was increasingly transformed into a wage worker. For instance, in earlier periods, the village weavers supplied the needs of the village people. They did not produce for the market. Under the new conditions, the weaver became more and more dependent upon the merchant for the sale of his products in the local or distant market. Further, competition made more capital necessary than the weaver possessed. This resulted in the weaver coming steadily into the grip of the merchant. 'Often the worker is still technically independent and supposedly buys yarn and sells cloth; usually he is bound to deal with only one merchant to whom he is heavily in debt.'[12] Thus like the cultivators, the artisans increasingly became subjected to merchant capital.

The decline of village artisan industries and urban handicrafts in India was not accomplished by the simultaneous, parallel and proportionate expansion of modern industries in India. The causes of this have been mentioned in the chapter dealing with the growth of these industries.

Due to this insufficient development of modern industries, surviving village handicrafts, even in the extant state of progressive ruination, played an important role in meeting the needs of the rural population concentrated in the legion of villages in the country. '...even today, the large bulk of the industrial population of India is formed of country artisans.'[13]

Abortive Attempts at their Reconstruction

Various attempts were made to stem the tide of the progressive dissolution of the village artisan industries, even to restore them to their former strength and status. The most important and spectacular attempts to rehabilitate those industries were those of the Indian National Congress and Gandhi. The All-India Spinners' organization started by Gandhi had for its object the resuscitation of the village handloom industry. The All-India Village Industries Association organized by the same leader had for its aim the revival, in a modified form, of all cottage industries.

These attempts did not, however, yield any appreciable results. The protagonists had more to rely on the patriotic and humanitarian sentiments of the people than on arguments of the economic superiority and advantages of village industries. For instance, regarding non-mill khaddar, Gandhi exhorted the people 'to wear khadi even though it may not be so soft and elegant in appearance as foreign fineries, nor as cheap.'[14] Mahatma Gandhi, with all his personal influence and even with big financial resources which were incidentally collected, in the main, from the Indian industrialists and came from the profits of the very modern industries in India whose growth had contributed to the ruin of the village industries, was unsuccessful in restoring these industries to any tangible extent. The fundamental cause of the failure of those attempts was that they worked against the forward march of history, against the forces of economic evolution.

The All-India Village Industries Association was organized on the initiative of Gandhi with the declared object of emancipating the village from dependence on machine goods, or reviving dead or dying pre-capitalist artisan industries. This programme of economic retrogression ignored the fundamental fact of history and life. It wanted to go against the inexorable fundamental laws which govern social existence. It strove to revive technique and economic forms which had been superseded by more advanced techniques and economic forms in historical development.

The pre-capitalist artisan industries, which this programme sought to revive, declined mainly due to the unequal struggle against the modern machine-based industries. The historical strength of the machine industries lay in the fact that its products were cheaper than those of the handicrafts. In a society, based on exchange of products, only those forms of production are selected in the economic struggle which satisfy human wants with minimum labour. In a society based on the market, cheaper products will always prevail and oust the costly ones. It was due to the action of the iron law of economic selection that artisan industry declined and machine-based industry came to stay.

It is not possible to revive an economic system undermined in the normal course of historical development. In historical progression, pre-capitalist handicrafts were increasingly superseded by modern industries. The attempts of leaders like Gandhi to revive the artisan industries based on a backward technique and the resultant lower productivity of labour were unhistorical and therefore not likely to succeed.

The almost ineffectual episode revival of some of the village industries such as hand spinning, handloom and some crafts, had been due to a number of factors. 'For given the hopeless existing agricultural disorganization, which condemns an overcrowded population on the land to forms of labour that are estimated to leave the equivalent of half the working year unoccupied, and given the absence of industrial development, the promotion of hand spinning, the handloom and craft industries is . . . a temporary palliative. . . .'[15]

This partial and extremely limited alleviative economic measure, however, was 'based on acceptance of the worst evils of the existing distortion and cramping of Indian economy and is directed to adaptation of these evils instead of to changing them.' 'Economically, there is no future for an artificially attempted revival of hand industry in a capitalist world. The khadi or hand-made cloth cannot compete in prices with the mill-made cloth, and is therefore beyond the reach of the poorest.'[16] In fact, the artificial revival, very limited and only episodic, was brought about with the aid of a group of industrialists like Birla and Bajaj who financed this revival* and a section of the upper classes who made deliberately economic sacrifices by purchasing the products of these industries believing that their sacrifice would reanimate the moribund handicrafts, would hit the British economically and liquidate the poverty of the Indian masses. This hope could not materialize since the programme clashed with historical and economic forces as well as psychological factors. Even Gandhi, once the uncompromising opponent of modern industries, modified his view in the light of the failure of his programme and came to accept a conditional and limited mechanization of production.

Decline of Village Industries, its Consequences

The progressive ruination of the village industries disrupted the unity of agriculture and industry on which the village economy was based. It made the village dependent for industrial goods on the outside world. The village no longer remained the almost autonomous economic unit it once was. It became a dependent part of the national and even world economy.

---

* Some of the Left nationalist and socialist groups considered the financial support given by Indian mill magnates and landlords to the khaddar and cottage industries movements as an astute manoeuvre. It was to divert the economic discontent of the agrarian population from finding expression in struggles against landlords, merchants and money-lenders who exploited it. The rich patrons thereby tried to decoy the rural masses into concentrating on programmes of fictitious solutions of their poverty which was, in reality, due to exorbitant rents, debts, land tax, and such other causes. In India the industrialists had close economic affiliation with the zamindars and the rural merchant and money-lending classes.

The introduction of capitalist land relations and new land laws such as making the individual peasant the unit of land revenue collection was not sufficient to break up the economic autarchy of the village. The undermining of its industrial pillar, the village artisan industries, was also necessary. The combined action of both these factors dealt a serious blow to the self-sufficient village.

The progressive ruination of the artisans drove larger and larger numbers of them to abandon their crafts which they had plied for generations. A section gravitated to cities and became factory or workshop employees or joined oil, sugar, tanning, furniture making and such industries. A section with some means bought land in the village and became peasant proprietors. Those without means became land labourers or even paupers. This resulted in overpressure on agriculture.

"The millions of ruined artisans and craftsmen, spinners, weavers, potters, tanners, smelters, smiths, alike from the town and from the villages, had no alternative save to crowd into agriculture. In this way India was . . . transformed, from being a country of combined agriculture and manufacturers, into an agricultural colony of British manufacturing capitalism.'[17] This was due to the fat that modern industries which could incorporate the ruined artisans did not develop at the same rate at which the handicrafts were ruined. A section of the ruined artisans sent their sons to schools who, after receiving a limited education, became teachers or clerks.

Nevertheless, as already mentioned, due to slow industrial expansion in India, the village artisan population in spite of its diminishing number formed a very large proportion of the total industrial population of the country.

The self-sufficient village was an obstacle to the growth of national consciousness and the development of a common national life. The progressive dissolution of the village artisan industries by undermining the economic foundations of the autarchic village paved the way for this consummation.

> 'Sickening as it must be to human feeling to witness those myriads of industrious, patriarchical and inoffensive social organizations disorganized and dissolved into their units, thrown into a sea of woes, and their individual members losing at the same time...their hereditary means of subsistence, we must not forget that these idyllic village communities...had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies.'[18]

Historically, the self-sufficient village economy had to be a casuality before the single national economy of the Indian people could come into being. Similarly, the self-sufficient, almost closed existence of the village community had to be shattered before the entire Indian people could be welded into a nation and live a common and historically higher social, political, economic and cultural existence.

(The artisans who left their village and became city workers, became members of the working class which, transcending all local and provincial limitations, began to organize on national lines. The ex-artisans developed wider consciousness of being members of the Indian working class. They developed a national outlook also)

Even those sections of the ruined artisans, who bought land and became peasants or who, due to lack of means, became land labourers, developed a different and wider consciousness. Under the new conditions created by the transformation of Indian agriculture, they were not members of an economically self-sufficient village community but formed, economically, classes which were integral parts of the Indian nation. Now living under the same system of land laws, the interests of all peasants or land labourers throughout India became more or less identical. The recognition of this stimulated a wider class and national consciousness among them and prompted them, in course of time, to build up or join such organizations as the All-India Kisan Sabha and others.

Even the artisans who still survived, were different from those in the pre-British period. While the latter were almost village servants catering mainly to the village needs, the former produced for the market. As such, they were affected by the movement of world prices and other forces. Hence, they organized themselves for economic self-defence on a national basis, building such organizations as the All-India Spinners' Association. Thus the village artisan developed a wider outlook and knowledge. He showed more initiative and individuality than the artisan of the self-sufficient village.

These were the principal historically progressive consequences of the destruction of the self-sufficient village to which the decline of village handicrafts contributed.

References

1 Refer Gadgil.
2 Refer Gadgil, Buchanan, Wadia and Merchant.
3 Refer Gadgil and Buchanan.
4 Buchanan, p. 130.
5 ibid., pp. 77-8.
6 Refer Gadgil.
7 Refer Buchanan and Gadgil.
8 Refer Gadgil.
9 ibid.
10 Report of the Finance Commission, 1896.
11 Gadgil, p. 175.
12 Buchanan, p. 77.
13 Gadgil, p. 163.
14 Gandhi, *Harijan*, 19 November, 1938.
15 R. P. Dutt, p. 515.
16 ibid., p. 515.
17 R. P. Dutt, p. 129.
18 Karl Marx, pp. 20-1.

CHAPTER VII

RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN INDIAN INDUSTRIES

Development of Modern Industries in India

Part II of Ch I

THE establishment of modern machine-based industries in India during the period of the British rule played a significant role in the consolidation of the national economy of the country. It also generated social forces which gave impetus to the growth of Indian nationalism and the nationalist movment. It is true that the industrial development of India was insufficient and lop-sided due to a number of reasons. Still, this industrial development created powerful social forces which helped national advance. To mention only the most important among them, the growth of modern industries brought into existence modern industrial cities which became the theatres of intense social, political, and cultural life and prime sources from which all progressive movements generally emanated. Further, the growth of modern industries led to the emergence of such new social groups as the class of the bourgeoisie and that of the proletariat, two basic classes whose specific weight in the movement of contemporary society was found great, even decisive.

The bourgeoisie and the proletariat are the basic classes of the modern capitalist society. As capitalist economy based on competition and commodity production develops, the intermediate classes of small producers such as artisans, and others, being unable to compete with powerful industrial rivals in the market, are ruined and increasingly fall into the ranks of the workers. In the countryside, too, the intermediate stratum of peasant proprietors, due to progressive impoverishment in the circumstances of capital economic environment, increasingly lose land to usurers and merchants and other capitalists and a good proportion of them become landless labourers or agricultural proletariat.

Thus while the intermediate social groups are unstable and dissolving social categories, the proletariat remains a stable and increasing class. The conflict between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is, therefore, the basic conflict in capitalist society, providing movement to it. In this class struggle, the working class sets to itself the goal of socialism, a social system based not on wage labour and private property in means of production as in the capitalist system, but on social ownership of those means and free co-operative labour of all workers.

The Indian working class, while striving for national independence, considered independence only as a milestone on the road to its socialist liberation.

Brief History of their Development

Part II & Ch 1

(We will now take a survey of the rise and expansion of these industries in India under the British rule, the extent and the nature of their development, and their organizational structure.

The establishment of railways in India, during the middle of the nineteenth century, created a condition for the growth of modern industries in India. One of the main motives in constructing railways in India was outlined by Lord Dalhousie in his famous Minute on Railways thus:

> 'The commercial and social advantages which India would derive from their establishments are...beyond all present calculation...England is calling aloud for the cotton which India does already produce in some degree, and would produce sufficient in quality, and plentiful in quantity, if only there were provided the fitting means of conveyance for it from distant plains to the several ports adopted for its shipment. Every increase of facilities for trade has been attended, as we have seen, with an increased demand for articles of European produce in the most distant markets of India... New markets are opening to us on this side of the globe under circumstances which defy the foresight of the wisest to estimate their probable value or calculate their future extent.'[1]

Thus the construction of railways in India was primarily undertaken to meet the raw material and market requirements of the British industries. Their construction also gave scope for the investment of British capital and sale of the products of the growing engineering industry of Britain in India.

(The establishment of railways and the accumulation of sufficient savings in the hands of the Indian merchant class to serve as basic capital, made possible the creation of the Indian-owned modern industries in India)

Regarding the role of railways in this development, Karl Marx wrote:

> 'When you have once introduced machinery into the locomotion of a country, which possesses iron and coals, you are unable to withhold it from its fabrication. You cannot maintain a net of railways over an immense country without introducing all those industrial processes necessary to meet the immediate and current wants of railway locomotion, and out of which there must grow the application of machinery to those branches of industry not immediately connected with the railways. The railway system will therefore become in India truly the forerunner of modern industry.'[2]

(*)

(The British were the pioneers in establishing modern industries in India such as plantation industries like indigo, tea and coffee, by the middle of the nineteenth century)

It was between 1850 and 1855 that the first cotton mill, a few jute mills and coal mines were started. In 1879, there were 56 cotton mills in India. The number of jute mills, mainly owned by the Europeans, rose to 20 in 1882. In 1880, 56 coal mines were working in the country. These were the only three principal modern industries in 1880 in India.

Between 1880 and 1895, though no important new industries were established, the old industries registered an appreciable advance. The extension of the cotton mill industry was particularly striking, the number of cotton mills increasing to 144 in 1894-95. The number of jute mills rose to 29 and that of coal mines to 123 in the same year.[3]

Nationalist economists like Ranade were impressed with the steady expansion of the Indian industries during this period and visualized a great industrial future for the Indian nation. Ranade remarked: 'India has now fairly entered upon the path which, if pursued in the same spirit which has animated its capitalists hitherto, cannot fail to work its industrial salvation.'[4]

Between 1895 and 1905, the rate of growth of the Indian industries, especially the cotton industry, slowed down. This was mainly due to the serious deterioration of the economic condition of the agrarian population as a result of two disastrous famines and, further, due to American speculation in cotton in 1902 which led to the shooting up of the prices of cotton, thereby adversely affecting the Indian mill industry. The Indian industries, however, in spite of these unfavourable factors, made progress during these years though at a retarded rate.

The Swadeshi movement which was started principally by the Indian National Congress in 1905 gave a momentum to the expansion of the Indian industries. In 1913-14, the number of cotton mills rose to 264 and that of jute mills to 64. The coal mining industry which had been developing uninterruptedly was employing 151,376 workers in 1914. The growth of this industry was mainly due to the extension of communications and expansion of the mill industry.

Between 1890 and 1914, new industries like those of petroleum, manganese, mica and saltpetre, came into existence. Some rice and timber mills were also started. In addition, 'Engineering and railway workshops, iron and brass foundries, also grew rapidly.'[5]

D. H. Buchanan describes the industrial expansion between 1890 and 1914 thus:

> 'The growth from 1890 until the World War was fairly steady in all fields. Cotton spindles more than doubled, cotton power looms quadrupled, jute looms increased four and a half times and coal raisings, six times....'[6]

In spite of this steady advance, the level of Indian industrial development was low in 1914. Progress was achieved primarily in the cotton and the jute industries only. Heavy industries were absent. 'Engineering was only represented by repair workshops, chiefly for the railways; the barest beginning with iron and steel was just being made on the eve of the 1914 war; there was no production of machinery.'[7]

There were a number of reasons why the industrial development of India did not proceed at a greater rate. Young Indian industries required, for rapid growth, protection, aiding them thereby to compete successfully with the powerful, well established industries of countries like Britain, Germany and others. The Indian government did not grant such protection. Neither did it concretely help the Indian industries. British publicists also recognized this as one of the main reasons thwarting the rapid industrial advance of India.

> 'Our record in regard to Indian industrial development has not always been a very creditable one in the past, and it was only under the pressure of war necessities that Government was driven to abandon its former attitude of aloofness if not jealousy towards purely Indian enterprise.'[8]

The pressure brought on the Indian government of the British economic interests was declared to be a reason for this omission to aid the Indian industries, in the Government Annual Report of 1921. It stated: 'Some time prior to the war certain attempts to encourage Indian industries by means of pioneer factories and Government subsidies were effectively discouraged from Whitehall.'[9]

Another handicap to rapid industrial development was insufficient cadres of technicians. The provision for technical education was meagre.

> 'The question of technical and industrial education has been before the Government and the public for over twenty years. There is probably no subject on which more has been written or said, while less has been accomplished.'[10]

There were a number of other factors which explained the insufficient and lop-sided development of the Indian industries. We will enumerate them at the end of the survey of industrial development.

During the war of 1914-18, due to a considerable decline in the import of foreign goods and, further, due to war requirements, Indian industries developed further. The government declared industrialization as its active policy. Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy, explained it thus in 1915:

> 'It is becoming increasingly clear that a definite and self-conscious policy of improving the industrial capabilities of India will have to be pursued after the war, unless she is to become the dumping ground for the manufacture of foreign nations who will be competing the more

> keenly for markets, the more it becomes apparent that the political future of the larger nations depends on their economic position. The attitude of the Indian public towards this question is unanimous, and cannot be left out of account....
>
> 'After the war India will consider herself entitled to demand the utmost help which her Government can afford, to enable her to take her place, so far as circumstances permit, as a manufacturing country.'[11]

In pursuance of this aim, the Industrial Commission was appointed in 1916.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report published in 1918 stated:

> 'On all grounds, a forward policy in industrial development is urgently called for, not merely to give India economic stability, but in order to satisfy the aspirations of her people....
>
> 'Both on economic and military grounds Imperial interests also demand that the natural resources of India should henceforth be better utilized. We cannot measure the access of strength which an industrialized India will bring to the power of the Empire.'[12]

Cotton and jute industries expanded during the war, as a result of the almost complete absence of foreign competition. The production of steel rose 91,000 tons in 1913 to 124,000 tons in 1918.

The rapid industrial development of a country requires as a premise the presence of the basic heavy (metallurgical and machine-producing) industry in that country. The practical absence of such an industry in India set a limit to its industrial expansion in war-time.

'The absence of basic engineering and heavy chemical industries was the weakest spot in India's industrial system.'[13] During the war, the Indian industries did not expand as they otherwise would have due to the fact that there were no well-established industries in the country producing machinery, chemicals, dyes and other articles necessary for industries. The iron and steel industry founded by J. N. Tata in 1911 only partially met the requirements of the Indian industries.

There were other reasons also for the insufficient expansion of Indian industries during the war when, due to the diversion of shipping mainly to war needs, the imports of articles from outside had considerably declined. Lokanathan enumerates them as follows:

> 'Apart from the lack of indigenous capital, of industrial leadership and technical skill, there were also some serious gaps in the supplies of raw materials and resources required for production. The supplies of sulphur, copper, zinc, lead and rubber were inadequate. Although large quantities of coal were available, they were not evenly distributed being concentrated in Bengal and Bihar, where 90 per cent of the total output was produced. Further, the peculiar type of industrial leadership which India developed, popularly known as the Managing Agency system, had the blighting effect of removing from the Managing Agents all incentive to risk money on new and possibly unsafe ventures when, as importers of machinery and mill stores and as traders and insurance agents, they could earn liberal commissions. Above all, a **laissez-faire** policy was quite inadequate for a poor country like India, which can only be developed under a well-conceived Government plan....
>
> 'Thus the last war, beyond affording temporary gains to a few established industries, did nothing to set the country firmly on the road to industrialization.'[14]

The Report of the Industrial Commission embodied a number of recommendations, the most essential being that the government should actively interest itself in the industrial development of the country and aid it by adopting various measures such as equipping itself with an adequate scientific and technical staff, which would guide the industrialists in efficiently developing the existing and creating important new industries in the country and others. The most essential of these recommendations, however, remained unfulfilled.[15]

The Reforms Act of 1919 transformed industry into a Provincial Subject but the provinces were technically and financially too weak to assist any appreciable industrial expansion. Regarding it, D. H. Buchanan remarked thus:

> '....With the constitutional reforms of 1919, the provincial organization (of industry) was made...one of the "transferred subjects" and thus put in the hands of the local governments responsible to elected legislatures. Unfortunately also, since the funds available have been wholly inadequate, no very important policies could be initiated. Furthermore, the encouragement of industry requires a far-reaching unified government policy concerning not only raw materials and methods of production, but markets as well... It is doubtful whether the mere provincial offices set up in India will have any considerable effect.'[16]

The recommendation of the Fiscal Commission in 1922 advising the government to inaugurate a policy of 'discriminating protection' was implemented by the latter in 1923. As a result of the new policy, a Tariff Board was established in 1923. In 1924, the young Tata Iron and Steel Industry received a government subsidy and also protection at the rate of 33½ per cent. In addition to this industry, other industries like cotton, match, sugar and a few others were also given protection to varying extent.

To assist industrial development a Central Bureau of Industrial Intelligence and Research was subsequently established.

These measures, however, did not lead to the creation of the vital prerequisite for a free, rapid and substantial expansion of Indian industry, namely the development of heavy industries. M. Visvesvaraya in his book, *Planned Economy for India* (1936), wrote 'Heavy industries, the greatest need of the day, have been left severely alone.'[17]

The subsidy granted to the Tata Iron and Steel Industry was withdrawn in 1927.

From 1927 onwards, the Indian tariff system was governed by the principle of Imperial Preference which worked mainly to the benefit of the British products 'over both non-Empire and Indian production in the Indian market.'[18] The Ottawa Agreements which were reached in 1932, were based on the principle of Imperial Preference. There was a storm of protest from the Indians against them. But they became operative in spite of this. Kate Mitchell comments: 'In this way the tariff system of the early twenties, originally proclaimed as a means for accelerating Indian industrialization, was transformed into a system which assisted British industry, to compete in the Indian market, while giving India in return the privilege of favoured rates for the sale of her raw materials and semi-manufactures in the British market . . . an obvious attempt to revert to the pre-1914 status.'[19]

The economic depression of 1929-33 hit the Indian peasantry very hard. They had to draw on whatever gold reserves they possessed.[20] There was a further loss of the gold reserves of the Indian masses during 1936 and 1937, diminishing thereby their purchasing power for industrial goods. This had an inevitable adverse effect on industrial expansion.

Regarding this drain, Kate-Mitchell remarked, 'This gold drain from the past savings of the masses of the Indian peasantry meant a still further impoverishment of the Indian market and a corresponding depression of Indian industry.'[21]

In spite of these difficulties, modern industries steadily developed during the years between the two wars. The following statistics reveal the progress made in some principal industries during this period:

		1922-3	1938-9
Cement	Tons	193,000	1,170,000
Coal	Million tons	19	28.3
Cotton piecegoods	Million yards	1,713.5	4,269.3
Jute	Million yards	1,187.5	1,774
Matches	Gross Boxes	16,500,000	21,100,000
	(1934-5)		
Paper	Tons	23,576	59,198
Pig iron	Tons	455,000	1,575,500
Sugar	Tons	84,000	1,040,048
Sulphuric acid	Cwt	529,637	607,000
Steel ingots	Tons	131,000	977,400

(Refer Wadia and Merchant, pp. 285-6)

Due to the expansion of the industries producing consumers' goods, the import of such goods from foreign countries into India declined. 'There has been an increasing tendency for imports of goods of general consumption to diminish in relative importance. These declined from 37 per cent in 1926-7 to 20 per cent in 1938-9. . . . The imports of raw materials (such as textile materials, dyes, colours and paints) have shown a great increase. From 16 per cent of the total imports in 1922-3 they increased to 24 per cent in 1938-9. The imports of machinery and other capital goods which formed 19 per cent of the total imports in 1926-7 constituted 25 per cent in 1938-9.'[22]

This increasing independence of the Indian people from foreign countries regarding consumers' goods, and increasing dependence on them for capital goods, before the outbreak of World War II, was described by Wadia and Merchant thus:

> 'The economic situation before the outbreak of the present war may be summed up as follows so far as industrial development is concerned. The expansion of the protected industries has not meant a very considerable addition to the total national income. The existence

> of these industries and their ability to meet the requirements of the internal market cannot be regarded as giving to the country that degree of self-sufficiency which may relieve it of all anxiety about the future, for, whilst we are independent of foreign countries for the supplies of sugar, cotton goods and for iron and steel, we are still largely dependent on foreign countries for the offtake of a substantial part of our production of raw materials. What is more important is that we are still dependent on foreign countries for the supply of machinery and other capital goods without which the establishment of new industries would be impossible.'[23]

In spite of this steady development of modern industries, India, as a whole, was being 'de-industrialized' since the rate of their development lagged behind the rate at which pre-modern indigenous industries were being ruined. In 1936, *The Economist, Indian Supplement*, wrote: 'The proportion of the population dependent upon industry as a whole has tended to decline. . . . Although India has begun to modernize her industries, it can hardly be said that she is as yet being 'industrialized'.'[24]

The Second World War which broke out in 1939 gave a momentum to Indian industrial development. The table of statistics on the following page mirrors the expansion achieved.

There was hardly any appreciable advance in shipping, aircraft and such other industries.

In spite of the wartime situation, there also did not take place any real development of heavy industries, the prime prerequisite for the independent and rapid industrial progress of a country and a barometer of its general economic advance. However, a number of light industries made progress during the period.

	1938-9	1939-40	1940-1	1941-2	1942-3	Average
Iron and steel ..	100	110	125	150	200	146
Cotton manufactures ..	100	94	100	153	92	110
Jute manufactures	100	106	91	103	85	96
Sugarcane factories ..	100	191	168	120	163	160
Paper	100	118	149	159	112	134
Electric energy generated ..	100	109	115	135	135	123

(L. C. Jain, *Indian Economy during the War*, p. 31)

'The progress registered even during the war has been almost all in the consumers' goods industries to the sad and striking neglect of production of capital goods industries. Cotton, sugar, paper, cement and even leather have all expanded, while the basic industries for the production of machine tools, automobiles, railway engines, ships and aeroplanes have been left out.'[25] And further, '. . . such industrial progress as has taken place in the country due to war is somewhat artificial and temporary in character rather than real and permanent.'[26]

'On the whole, there is substantial evidence for the view that Indian industry during the war is falling behind its competitors in its degree of both mechanization and rationalization. . . . The post-war danger in India is industrial collapse, while the post-war need is industrial expansion.'[27]

Emergence of Trusts and Monopolies

After this brief sketch of the development of modern industries in India under the British rule we will proceed to describe some of the important characteristics of this development.

One of the striking features of economic development in India during this period in the sphere of trade, industry and banking, was the concentration of a big proportion of enterprises in a few hands.

> 'There are (in 1940) nearly 9,000 factories in India giving employment to about 17,00,0000 workmen. The capital invested in companies, registered in India, totals up to three thousand million rupees...
>
> 'A group of Managing Agents control about 500 industrial concerns, with capital of nearly fifteen hundred millions and covering every field of industrial activity. This concentration of control is common to all industries.'[28]

This contrasted with the history of the economic development of such countries as England, France, Germany and the U.S.A. where such concentration took place in later stages of their economic growth only.[29] In India, on the other hand, concentration took place within a few decades of the establishment of industries.

This concentration led to the growth of Trusts on lines both of horizontal and vertical combination. These Trusts controlled a substantial sector of the economic life of the nation. There were about 40 such Trusts in the country in the year 1940 which controlled about 450 concerns with capital over eleven hundred million rupees. These concerns covered industrial and transport as well as financial fields. Killick Nixons, Sassoons, Andrew Yule, Bradys and Jardine and Skinner were some of the powerful British Trusts. Tatas, Birla and Dalmia were some of the outstanding Indian monopoly organizations.

These Trusts controlled economic enterprises of almost all categories. For instance, Tatas controlled twenty-two concerns including 4 cotton mills, 4 electric companies, 4 power companies, 1 iron and steel works, 1 airway company, 1 oil company, 1 insurance company and even a hotel. Similarly Andrew Yule & Co. which operated in Eastern India, controlled 52 concerns including 11 jute mills, 11 coal mines, 15 tea, 1 paper, 2 rubber, 1 oil and even 1 landed estate.[30] These instances give an idea of the extensive activity of those few Trusts in the field of national economy and their control over the economic life of the people.

Further, within the small number of Trusts, the control was concentrated in the hands of a few Directors who commanded key positions. The system of interlocutory directorships which was widely prevalent further helped to strengthen the power of these few Directors. About this Asoka Mehta wrote in 1940: 'Five hundred important industrial concerns of our country are managed by 2,000 directors. These directorships are held by 850 individuals. But, 1,000 of these directorships are held by just 70 men.... At the apex of the pyramid stand 10 men holding 300 directorships, the supreme arbiters of the destinies of our industrial economy.'[31]

For instance, Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas was a director of 51 enterprises of such diverse types as the B.E.S. & T. Co., the Oriental Government Security Life Assurance Co., the Indian Radio and Cable Communications Co., the Reserve Bank of India, a number of presses, a number of textile mills, a number of railway companies, the Tata Hydro-Electric Co. and a number of electric and other companies.

Dominance of Finance Capital

Since large masses of capital are necessary for starting the modern types of industries and as it is not possible to mobilize large sums from small investors, the aid of banks and big financial firms becomes indispensable. This resulted in the control of Indian industry by finance capital. India here exhibited the general feature of the economic life of all capitalist countries today, namely, the control of finance capital over almost all branches of economy. 'A dozen individuals. by their control over banks, insurance companies and investment trusts, occupy commanding positions in the industrial life of Bombay. Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas and his cousin Sir Chunilal Mehta, between them hold directorships in every Trust and in well-nigh every important concern in Bombay. They have facilitated or frustrated as it suited them many an amalgamation and absorption. Premchand Brothers, Jeejeebhoy Brothers, Cowasji Jehangirs, in their ways exert similar influence, thanks to their financial power.'[32]

Finance capital, both British and Indian, mainly operated through what is known as the managing-agency system. 'By this system a relatively small number of managing-agency firms promote, control and to a considerable extent finance the various industrial companies and enterprises, govern their operations and output, and market their products, the boards of directors of the companies fulfilling only a subordinate or even nominal role. The cream of the profit passes, not to the shareholders, but to the managing agency.'[33]

British Capital, its Stranglehold on Indian Economy

The English managing-agency firms were stronger than the Indian. Andrew Yule & Co. and Jardine and Skinner were two of the powerful English firms. Their superior financial strength and key control of industrial companies helped these firms to establish increasing power over industries, especially during periods of economic difficulty.[34]

Finance capital, both British and Indian, operated through the system of banks also. The Reserve Bank of India founded in 1934 and the Imperial Bank of India established in 1920 were the two most powerful banking institutions in the country. A number of Exchange Banks also operated, engaged in the import and export trade of the country, the Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China, the National Bank of India, and the Mercantile Bank of India, being the important ones among them.

There was a third group of banks in the country, the Indian Joint-stock Banks in which there was a preponderance of Indian capital.

The Imperial Bank and the Exchange Bank were predominantly non-Indian. Their combined financial resources were greater than those of the Indian Joint-stock Banks which were mainly under Indian control.

The Reserve Bank of India was the strongest banking institution in the country. It had wide powers and was controlled by the Government through the right of appointment of its principal officials such as the Governor, Deputy Governors and a number of Directors of the Bank.

A number of Indian nationalist economists and politicians declared that the substantial British domination of Indian banking was one of the decisive obstacles to the rapid as well as free industrial development of India. In the matter of financing the Indian-owned industries, both the British-controlled banks and the government pursued policies which were primarily determined from the standpoint of British economic interests and not those of Indian industrial expansion.[35]

Thus the predominant control of British finance capital retarded the rapid tempo and free growth of the industrial and general economic development of India. The Indian nationalist movement which stood for a programme of rapid industrial development of the country as a pre-condition for the material, social and cultural advance of the Indian people was consequently very critical of the attitude of British finance capital and the economic policies of the government.

The Indian National Congress, the Liberals and other political organizations and groups, who stood for the transformation of India into a highly industrialized country, severely criticized the various economic safeguards provided by the Constitution framed under the Government of India Act of 1935. They stated that the powers given to the Governors of Provinces to overrule the action of Indian Ministers would only perpetuate the existing preponderance and control of British capital over the Indian economy and prevent the free and rapid industrial and general economic advance of the country.

Due to the development of Indian industries as well as the increase in the competitive power of Britain's non-Indian rivals like Germany, Japan and the U.S.A., Britain's share of the Indian market exhibited steady decline.[36]

> 'Since 1936 India...is no longer Britain's principal customer as it had been for a century past, but fell in 1937 to second place and in 1938 to third place.
>
> This sharp decline, developing most rapidly in the post-1918 period, in Britain's share in the Indian market reflects...the collapse in what had been the main field of nineteenth century industrial capitalist exploitation of India—the export of cotton goods...
>
> But while the old basis was thus collapsing, the new basis of profits by finance-capitalist exploitation was steadily rising and extending in volume. By 1929 the total of British capital investments in India was estimated in the *Financial Times*...at £573 million on the most conservative basis, and more probably £700 million.'[37]

The British Associated Chambers of Commerce estimated the figure at £1,000 million for 1933.

One important feature of British and other foreign capital investments in India was that there had been a disproportion between the degree of industrialization and the amount invested. It was due to the fact that a good proportion of foreign capital had been invested in non-industrial economic fields since this was found more profitable. Even regarding industries, it found expression in light industries.[38]

Reasons for the Lop-sided Growth of Indian Industries

Indigenous capital, already very small, also sought to some extent investment in more profitable non-industrial channels. D. R. Gadgil remarks: 'The smallness of India's capital resources, the competition for these from both agriculture and industry, the high profits to be obtained in moneylending and in commerce, and the particularly high rates that ruled for money accommodation at harvest time, all these combined to prevent a large flow of Indian capital into industry.'[39]

There were a number of reasons why the industrial development of India had been slow, retarded and lop-sided. The

Indian industries developed only after powerful industries were established in England, Germany, the U.S.A. and other countries. This made it difficult for the former to compete successfully with the latter in the market. Further, the industries of those highly industrialized countries had the active support of their national states. In India, on the contrary, the British government, following the principle of free trade, did not grant till 1924 any great degree of protection to Indian industries, which was vitally necessary for them to be able to compete with the giant state-aided industries of other countries. Even when the Tariff Board was established and protective duties initiated, it did not appreciably help Indian industries, since, as mentioned before, the policy of protection was subordinated to the principle of Imperial Preference. However, a number of industries producing consumers' goods benefited by the protective measures.

The absence of considerable well-established heavy metallurgical and machine-producing industries in the country was another, and perhaps the most serious handicap for the rapid industrial development of the country.

One of the characteristics of a colonial economy which makes it subservient to the interests of imperialist economy is that it does not possess, to a large extent, heavy industries. These industries are a vital precondition for free, balanced, and rapid industrial development of a modern society.

> 'The real change comes in any country when the iron and steel industries begin to be successful... The development of the metallurgical industries means the real industrial revolution. England, Germany and the United States of America all started their iron and steel industries before they started their textile factories.'[40]

Another obstacle to the growth of Indian industries was the immense poverty of the agricultural population which constituted about four-fifths of the Indian people and who represented a formidable potential market for industrial goods. As seen in the chapter dealing with agriculture, a number of factors such as debt, rent and revenue burdens, together with the decling income from agriculture, had brought about serious impoverishment of a great majority of the agrarian population. Indian industries could not appreciably expand unless a radical agrarian reform had been introduced including a revision of land relations and productive aid by the state to the farmers to renovate agriculture, thereby increasing the purchasing power of that huge population and enabling them to buy extensively industrial goods.

The frequent dependence of Indian industrial development on British finance capital and the resultant penetration and control of Indian industries by British capital, adversely affected that development. Financial aid had often been rendered on condition that Indian industrialists purchased industrial plant from British firms and to those industries which did not come in conflict with similar British industries in the market.

Inadequate supply of cadres of technicians due to insufficient institutions imparting technical education was another factor which worked as a handicap to the growth of industry. The demand for increased technical education in the interests of industries had been a permanent demand of the Indian nationalist movement since its very birth. The Indian National Congress, the Liberals and all other progressive political groups, always included in their programme the item of technical education.

Further, Indian industries had entered the phase of concentration and monopoly. The disadvantages of the monopoly form of organization to industrial expansion were, therefore, inherent in the industrial situation in India.

Indian Monopolies, their Peculiarities

Monopolies in India were, however, distinguished from monopolies in the highly developed capitalist countries like the U.S.A., Britain, France, and others in a variety of ways. Monopolies in those advanced countries came into existence as climax of a long period of development of capitalist economy on the basis of 'free competition'. In India, due to the belated arrival of capitalism, capitalist economic enterprises assumed a monopoly form without any long period and tradition of a non-monopoly phase of indigenous capitalist development. Thus, while in countries mentioned above, capitalist monopolies appeared after the development of productive forces and general economic evolution had reached a very high level, in India they emerged even while the productive forces of the country were insufficiently developed. In India, the monopoly form existed in contradiction to the immature state of industrial and other productive forces of Indian society. Parasitism and social, polical and economic retrogression, which a monopoly form of capitalist economic organisation implies, was particularly harmful to Indian economic development since it was on a low level.*

The second difference between Indian monopolies and those in advanced countries lay in their relation to their respective states. While monopolies in the U.S.A., Britain, France, and such other countries, in general, determined the economic policies, both internal and international, of their governments and received even state support, the Indian-owned monopolies as a rule, did not and could not influence the basic economic policies of or receive appreciable support from the Indian government which, not being a national government, was usually solicitous of safeguarding the British economic interests.

A third peculiarity in the position of Indian monopolies lay in the fact that they existed in a predominantly agricultural country inhabited by poverty-stricken rural masses. The problem of market was particularly acute for Indian industrial monopolies. It was the paradox of Indian capitalist development that the highest form of capitalist economic organization, the monopoly form, came into existence on the background of an economic environment which primarily consisted of primitive and poor agricultural economy, with semi-feudal and even pre-feudal remnants within it.

---

* The working out of the laws of competition between various enterprises under capitalism gives rise to monopolies, which own and control entire branches of industry, entire industries even, both in the national and international economic spheres. Though monopolies emerge, competition does not vanish. Now, monopolies compete with one another in the world arena. The struggle between these economic giants assumes world-wide and fierce forms sharpening conflicts between capitalist nations and leading to intense economic and military warfare among them.

The rise of monopolies indicates an extraordinary development of productive forces and their social character. It also indicates the conscious or unconscious recognition of the planning principle by the capitalist owners themselves, without which modern productive forces at their present level of development cannot be freely and fruitfully operated. However, under the conditions of capitalist private ownership of the means of production, a comprehensive, harmonious and universal planning of production is not possible. Thus, while the highly developed productive forces of the modern epoch provide the indispensable material basis for socialism, socialist economy is the only determined economic form within which these forces can further and freely develop.

Along with private monopolies, there existed in India, as in advanced capitalist countries, state monopoly enterprises. However, there was a basic difference in the role of those state monopolies in India and in other countries. In India, state monopoly enterprises like railways were owned by a government which was not a national government and which therefore administered those monopolies usually to suit the interests of British capitalism and not of the free economic advance of the Indian people. Railways were, therefore, kept outside the control of the Central Legislature. In free countries like the U.S.A., Britain and France, when the state took over and owned certain enterprises, the senate or the parliament had complete control over the policies governing the conduct of those enterprises by the state. Those policies might be, till the state power rested in the hands of the capitalist class in those countries, in the interest of that class but they did not subserve any foreign interests as in India. The basic economic policy of the Indian government, though modified by the pressure of popular opinion, was moulded neither by the Indian people, nor by the Indian-owned monopolies but by the interests of British finance capital.

The currency policy of the government, reflected in measures such as the regulating of exchange ratio unfavourable to Indian interests was also one of the factors which retarded free industrial development.

These were some of the principal obstacles in the way of the rapid all-sided industrial advance of India.

India possessed the prerequisites, both human and material, for evolving powerful and prosperous industries which would have made the Indian people rich and an independent industrial national. Still, due to these handicaps, she remained predominantly a poor and agrarian community with insufficient industries. Regarding this, D.H. Buchanan wrote in 1934 as follows:

> 'Here was a country with all the crude elements upon which manufacturing depends, yet during more than a century it has imported factory-made goods in large quantities and has developed only a few of the simplest industries for which machinery and organization had been highly perfected in other countries. With abundant supplies of raw cotton, raw jute, easily mined coal, easily mined and exceptionally high grade iron ore; with a redundant population often starving because of lack of profitable employment, with a hoard of gold and silver ...and with access through the British government to a money market which was lending large quantities of capital to the entire world; with an opening under their own flag for British business leaders who were developing both at home and in numerous new countries, all sorts of capitalistic industries; with an excellent market within her own borders...; with all these advantages, India, after a century, was supporting only about two per cent of her population by factory industry... The country remains overwhelmingly agricultural.'[11]

Prerequisites of Healthy Industrial Development

All progressive nationalist groups in the country, stood for and pressed the demand for industrialization of India. They considered it as a material premise for the economic prosperity, democratic social progress and cultural advance of the Indian people. Industrialization of India was recognized as the main remedy for relieving the overpressure on agriculture which was one of the reasons of the impoverishment of the agriculturists. Hence, all social and political groups in the country, in spite of their other vital differences, made industrialization an essential item of their economic programme. The Swadeshi movement, the fight against the rupee ratio, the struggle against the power granted to the Governors of Provinces under the Constitution of 1935, of 'safeguards' to protect British economic interests—a struggle in which all political groups joined—were inspired with the aim of transforming India into a rich industrial country. The same aim animated the sponsors of such economic plans as the Tata-Birla Plan, wherein a Loyalist Dalal, a Liberal Tata and a Gandhian Congressite Birla made a common cause.

We have enumerated the main obstacles to the rapid expansion of Indian industries such as the basic economic policies of the government; the immense poverty of the agrarian population, the potential market for industrial goods; the financial weakness of the Indian bourgeoise; and ever intensifying competition with international rivals who had the support of their respective governments, and others.

In such a situation, a programme of planned national economy, covering every branch of economic life, could have alone brought about an assured, rapid and symmetrical development of industries. Such a programme would have included the transformation of the poor and primitive agriculture into a prosperous modernized agriculture; modernization and extension of industries; development of metallurgical, chemical, electrical, machine producing and such other industries; extension of railway, bus and other means of transport; raising of technical and engineering cadres; training of agronomists on a mass scale and other vital items. In fact, the programme of a planned national economy would have involved a veritable techno-economic revolution in the economic life of the Indian people. It would have presented the colossal economic task of mobilizing and making a maximum and planned use of all vast material and human resources of the Indian sub-continent. Without such a programme, however, rapid industrial development as well as a general economic advance were not possible.

That a national economic plan was the vital prerequisite for economic survival and expansion, was recognized even by the bourgeoisie whose 'holy of holies' in the pre-crisis period was the principle of *laissez faire*.

Bombay Plan, its Limitations

The Indian industrialists too recognized the arch-need of planning national economy. The Bombay Plan was the most outstanding among the various plans projected by the Indian industrial groups. Realizing that political power was vital for implementing any such plan, the sponsors of the Bombay Plan looked forward to a national government to aid them in its fulfilment.

There were some serious defects in the Bombay Plan. Its protagonists hoped to achieve the programme of extensive industrial expansion without any radical revision of land relations extant in the country, a vital pre-condition for liquidating the poverty of the agriculturists and thereby elevating their purchasing power. A revolution in land relations was necessary, to save the agrarian economy from further deterioration and even collapse and the agrarian population from deeper impoverishment.

The sponsors of the Plan further hoped to implement it within the framework of the categories of capitalist economy such as competition, production for profit, private ownership of productive apparatus and others. Though planning on a limited scale is possible on a capitalist basis, a comprehensive and nationwide planned economy requires as its prerequisite social ownership of land, industries, transport and other material means of production. A free, planned, and maximum manipulation of resources in the interests of and for the use of the people instead of for the profits of a few owners, demands that these resources should be owned by the society as a whole. The entire motive of production must be shifted from that for profit to that for use.

Even then, due to the fact that we live in an epoch of international division of labour and, more or less, a world-wide unified economy, the most well-planned national economy will be subject to the forces of world economy. A fully well-planned national economy can therefore become only a part of a planned world-wide economy.

However, planned national economy was substantially possible in a country like India with its tremendous man-power and rich natural resources. But, for its realization, it presupposed as an inescapable premise national freedom, power not in the hands of vested interests but in those of the producing strata and social ownership of the means of production. The exponents of the Bombay Plan, however, conceived it in a different way.

'May we suggest that this plan definitely rejects the idea of the control of the economic organization in the interests of the consumers on the socialist basis, and only contemplates planning within the present economic structure? So long as the profit motive functions in a capitalist structure, the possibility of periodic crises and chronic unemployment cannot be overcome. Nowhere in the present scheme do we find a reference to this inherent weakness of a capitalist order. But it is naively assumed by the authors of the plan that they can organize economic life in such a way that some parts would be fully owned and managed by the state, others merely managed, while others would be only controlled. In other words, they propose a sort of dual or mixed economy, one sector being fully free, others partly controlled and/or managed by the state. But it is forgotten, attempts at the regulation of one part of the economic structure may serve to sharpen the conflicts of competition in the structure as a whole.'[42]

Social Significance of Indian Industrial Development

In spite of its insufficient and unbalanced character, industrialization played almost a revolutionary role in the life of the Indian people. It led to the consolidation of the unified national economy which evolved in India as a result of the introduction of capitalist economic forms in agriculture by the British government, penetration of India by the commercial forces of the world and spread of modern transport during the British rule. Industrialization made the Indian economy more unified, cohesive and organic. It raised the tone of the economic life of India.

Further, it brought into existence modern cities which became the centres of modern culture and increasing democratic social life and from which all progressive movements, social, political, and cultural, emanated.

The progressive social and political groups in India realized the advantages, direct and indirect, of industrialization. Though they differed in their views regarding the social organization of industrial and other economic forces and resources whether on the *laissez faire* principle of private enterprise and unlimited individual competition or on a planned national basis, capitalist or socialist, they all stood for rapid, all-sided expansion of industries. While sharply divided on many vital issues, they put up a united demand for it. They jointly struggled for the removal of the various handicaps on industrial development. The demand for industrialization thus became a national demand.

The establishment of modern industries, in addition, engendered two important classes of the contemporary society, the bourgeoise and the proletariat, whose great significance in the national movement will be subsequently discussed.

References

1 Lord Dalhousie, *Minute on Railways*, 1953.
2 Karl Marx, p. 62.
3 Refer Gadgil, pp. 74-7.
4 Ranade, p. 18.

5 Gadgil, pp. 117-18.
6 Buchanan, p. 139.
7 R. P. Dutt, p. 153.
8 Sir Valentine Chirol, in the *Observer*, 2 April, 1922.
9 *Moral and Material Progress of India*, 1921, p. 144.
10 Sir John Hewett, Lieutenant-Governor of the U.P. at the Indian Industrial Conference, 1907.
11 Dispatch to the Indian Secretary, 26 November, 1915.
12 Montagu-Chelmsford Report, p. 267.
13 Lokanathan, p. 6.
14 ibid., p. 6.
15 Refer Wadia and Merchant, p. 284.
16 D. H. Buchanan, p. 464.
17 Sir M. Visvesvaraya, p. 247.
18 Wadia and Merchant, p. 285.
19 Kate Mitchell, p. 285.
20 Refer Varga.
21 Kate Mitchell, p. 286.
22 Lokanathan, pp. 7-8.
23 Wadia and Merchant, p. 287.
24 *A Survey of India Today*, 12 December, 1936.
25 Jain, p. 48.
26 ibid., p. 128.
27 ibid., p. 128.
28 Asoka Mehta, p. 3.
29 Refer Hobson and Lenin.
30 Refer Asoka Mehta, p. 9.
31 ibid., pp. 11-12.
32 ibid., p. 14.
33 R. P. Dutt, p. 168.
34 Report of the Central Banking Inquiry Committee, 1931, Vol. 1, p. 279.
35 Refer Visvesvaraya, pp. 64-5.
36 Refer *Review of Trade of India* in 1937-8 issued by Dr. Gregory, Economic Adviser to the Government of India.
37 R. P. Dutt, p. 145.
38 Refer R. P. Dutt.
39 Gadgil, p. 193.
40 Knowles, p. 443.
41 D. H. Buchanan, pp. 450-51.
42 Wadia and Merchant, The Bombay Plan, a Criticism, pp. 3-4.

CHAPTER VIII

MODERN MEANS OF TRANSPORT AND RISE OF INDIAN NATIONALISM

Transport in Pre-British India

THE ROLE of modern means of transport such as railways, buses, and steamships, in the consolidation of peoples into modern nations cannot be overestimated. It is not a mere accident that the nineteenth century, the century of the invention of modern means of transport, was also the century of emerging nationalism. It is true that some peoples like the English and the French embarked on their careers as nations in the eighteenth century, still, their full development as nations in the social and cultural sense took place only in the course of the nineteenth century. Modern means of transport invented in that century helped to consolidate them, economically and culturally, as nations.[1]

In India too, the establishment and spread of railways and motor buses appreciably contributed to the forging of the Indian people into a nation.

The technique of transport depends upon and is determined by the existing level of economic development of a country. India of the pre-British period possessed a feeble transport system because, as a result of the scientific and technical backwardness of the people, modern industries which alone could manufacture modern means of transport, did not exist. The village, where the overwhelming portion of the population lived, was autarchic. As a result of this, there was no stimulus to the improvement of the existing means of transport. Weak economy perpetuated the weak transport system and the weak transport system hindered the development of that economy.[2]

> 'Most of the people lived in isolated villages, and except for a few articles of small size and high value, such as drugs, silks, and precious stones which are easily transportable, and a few bulkier commodities more universally used, yet in small quantities, such as iron and salt, they were dependent almost entirely upon local produce. There was little specialization among the communities and hence little movement of either goods or persons. Taking the crops from the fields, and a small share of these to nearby trading centres, was the chief movement of goods and this could be effected on the heads of men or the backs of animals. For the few longer distances and large-scale movements, bullock-carts were used in the dry season. In a few regions, especially in Bengal, the many rivers and bayous connected with the mouths of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, provided local and fairly long-distance carriage by water. Also the Ganges and the Indus systems in the north and west, and the Krishna and the Godavari in the south furnished, access for small craft to parts of the interior. During Mogul times there were a few dirty roads connecting the local capitals, and the British did little road building until after they became rulers.'[3]

Due to the feeble means of transport existing in pre-British India, there could not develop large-scale unified economic, social and cultural life among the people. Mass exchange among the common people for economic, social and cultural purposes, was not possible since there were no facilities for quick travel. It is true that a few learned individuals, a few traders, some of those connected with the state apparatus and pilgrims travelled over the country, still the overwhelming majority of the population living in autarchic villages rarely left these villages. In the absence of any appreciable social exchange among the people, they developed only local village or caste consciousness. They could not develop national consciousness and outlook.

Introduction of Modern Means of Transport

In the first half of the nineteenth century, as a result of the unprecedented technological advance together with the accumulation of capital from the trade during the previous period, powerful machine-based industries sprang into existence in England. The English industrialists were faced with the problem of rapid disposing of the products of these new and steadily expanding industries and securing raw materials for them from India and other parts of the world.

The interests of the British industries urged the government of the East India Company to establish railways and construct roads in India. Lord Dalhousie, who initiated a programme of wide railway construction in India, in his famous *Minute on Railways* unambiguously defined the economic reason behind this construction.

Further, British capitalism was being steadily confronted with the accumulation of surplus capital which could not always be employed profitably in Britain. An outlet was needed for this surplus capital. If the Indian government were to adopt a programme of railway construction, it would require capital. A part of the surplus capital accumulated in Britain could be loaned to the Indian government and thus find an outlet.

In addition to these economic reasons, there were political-administrative and military-strategic reasons for establishing railways in India.

The British conquest, when it became complete, united India, for the first time in her centuries-old history, into a single political-administrative system. This political-administrative unity of India accomplished by Britain was not a surface unity.

Unlike the pre-British governments which were largely only revenue-collecting agencies, the British government made inroads in the inner life of the village, broke its inner juridical and policing independence, subjected it to the reign of a uniform system of law governing the entire land, posted its representatives in the village to enforce these laws, in fact, took over from the panchayats of the autonomous villages all those functions which belonged to the state but which those bodies had been performing from times immemorial.

Thus the British evolved in India a colossal administrative apparatus penetrating even the remotest village. The necessity to erect and efficiently operate such an apparatus also prompted them to establish and extend railways, to construct modern roads, to establish the post and telegraph systems. It was this necessity of assembling villages, towns, districts, and provinces, increasingly brought under the British rule, into a single political-administrative system, which also stimulated railway construction in India.

Further, the military-strategic reason, also made the introduction of the modern transport system in India necessary. The British regime established in India had to be defended both against internal rebellion and from external invasion. For a rapid mobilization and transfer of troops at the required key strategic points, it was necessary to lay down adequate railway lines and construct modern metalled roads. Thus the military defence need of Britain also led to railway construction and, in general, to the extension of modern means of communications.

Their Lop-sided Development

Thus, the modern means of transport were established and extended not from the point of view of the free, normal, all-sided development of the economic, social, political and cultural life of the Indian nation, but primarily to serve the economic, political and military interests of Britain in India. This lent a colonial character to the Indian transport system the structure of which thereby was adapted to making India play the role of a colonial adjunct of the British metropolis. It, therefore, led to the insufficient, lop-sided distorted development of both railway and modern road systems in India.

> 'The comparative inferiority of India in the matter of railway mileage may be illustrated by pointing out that as against India's 2.2 miles of railway line per 100 sq. miles and 7,894 inhabitants per mile of railway line, the United States which is a vast agricultural country like India,...has 8.42 miles of line per 100 sq. miles and 469 inhabitants per mile of railway line. Again, Canada, Argentina, the Union of South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, have an average of only 300 inhabitants per mile of railway line.'[4]

The British government, realizing the vital role of railways in safeguarding the economic interests of British capital in India as well as in preserving the British power, always retained the final control of railways in the hands of its representative, the Viceroy of India. Even the Government of India Act of 1935 provided that 'the Executive Authority of the federation in respect of the regulation and the construction, maintenance, and operation of railways shall be exercised by a Federal Railway Authority. The Federal Railway

Authority will be directly under the Governor-General and the Legislature will have no control over it.'

Though railway and road construction in India was motivated by the considerations of the British interests and though, as a result of this, its development remained insufficient and lop-sided, still, it objectively played a progressive role in the history of the Indian people.

Railways helped the historically progressive new economic forces to destroy the economic foundations of the old Indian society. They helped the penetration of India by the industrial products of the modern society, thereby breaking the economic autarchy of the village. They helped to weld India into a single economic unit and also linked India with the world market. Railways helped to create a national economy, the material framework of the Indian nation.

> 'The railways were of outstanding potency. By creating the conditions necessary for specialization, they revolutionized production and trade, enabled the establishment of large-scale modern industries, and led to the development of great ports and industrial centres... The railways also tried to equalize prices throughout the country and throughout the year and, in general, to effect economic unification... railways did even more than the famine relief organization to transform the famine problem. They also helped to make slave-emancipation a reality by providing alternative occupations and facilitating mobility.'[5]

We will enumerate some of the principal positive gains derived from the introduction of railways and motor bus transport in India.

The establishment of railways in India made inevitable, whether the British liked it or not, the birth of Indian industry owned by Indian capital as Karl Marx had prophesied as early as 1853:

> 'I know that the English millocracy intend to endow India with railways with the exclusive view of extracting at diminished expense the cotton and other raw materials for their manufactures. But when you have once introduced machinery into the locomotion of a country, which possesses iron and coals, you are unable to withhold it from its fabrication. You cannot maintain a net of railways over an immense country without introducing all those industrial processes necessary to meet the immediate and current wants of railway locomotion, and out of which there must grow the application of machinery

to those branches of industry not immediately connected with railways. The railway system will therefore become, in India, truly the fore-runner of modern industry.'[6]

Railways, their Progressive Significance

The role of railways in accelerating the process of industrialization was also pointed out by Joan Beauchamp:

> 'The building of railways, the spread of education among the Indian middle classes, the growing burden of the tribute exacted by Great Britain coupled with the increasing pressure on agriculture, the presence of raw materials such as cotton, jute, iron and coal, which could be profitably worked up in India itself—all these things made the coming of industrialism in India inevitable...'[7]

Railways coupled with the profits from trade in the hands of the Indian trading class, sections of landlords and rich intellectuals made the birth of independent Indian industries possible. This was an event of profound significance since it brought into existence the class of national industrial bourgeoisie, whose very interests brought them into conflict (conflict over market) with Britain, and that of the industrial proletariat whose specific weight in the national movement steadily increased.

Railways and modern roads created a veritable revolution in the agricultural area. They made agricultural production marketable. The agriculturists began to produce commercial crops. The agricultural economy became an integral part of the national and even world economy. The economic isolation of the village, the main cause of its social and cultural stagnation, broke down.

Railways were a veritable boon during periods of famine. The surplus products of other parts of the country could be swiftly brought to the famine-stricken area and the agony of the population of that area alleviated. If famines still occurred, it was generally and primarily not because of the lack of products in the area affected but often because of the lack of minimum purchasing power of the people.

Modern means of transport were a formidable force in unifying the Indian people socially. The locomotive, triumphantly traversing a big physical distance, also helped to annihilate the social distance dividing the people living in different parts.

Motor buses, which were introduced at a later stage, played a great role in breaking the isolation of the village. 'As the millions of Indian rats carry plague, so the thousands and thousands of buses, always crammed with passengers, and carrying them from the villages to the city and back, carry the virus of modernism.'[8]

Railways and buses made mass migration of people from one part of the country to another possible. To get work or to improve their prospects, people travelled by buses and railways from Madras to Bombay, from Lahore to Calcutta. Educated individuals, doctors, teachers, clerks, chose to change their province for employment and in cities, like Bombay, professional classes composed of individuals belonging to almost all provinces in the country were found.

The intermixture of people made possible by the large-scale facilities of travel provided by modern means of transport, had profound results. Though for a time, old local and provincial outlooks persisted, a process of their undermining slowly set in. Old narrow perspective and outlooks were steadily overcome. This paved the way for the growth of a wider national consciousness and co-operation on a national basis.

Railways proved effective dissolvents of orthodox social habits regarding food, physical contact, and others. Railways, impartially, only on the basis of payment of railway fare, carried the Hindu touchable and the untouchable. Though the former was first shocked, he soon reconciled himself to travelling with the untouchable since he did not like to forgo the advantages of travelling by train. Railways thus weakened the adamantine orthodoxy of the orthodox Hindus. The practice of railway travel, in course of time, dissolved his scruples regarding food, drink, and untouchability. Railways made people move and intermix. This constant intermingling and social exchange steadily destroyed the former habits of social isolation.

But for railways, motor buses and other modern means of communications, political and cultural life on a national scale would not have been possible. If these became the means of consolidating and preserving British rule in India, they also played the role of being the material means for organizing the political movement of the Indian people on a national scale against that rule. Such political organizations as the Indian National Congress, the Liberal Federation, the National Democrats, Youth Leagues, the All-India Women's Conference, All-India Student Organizations, All-India Kisan Sabhas, the All-India Trade Union Congress and others could neither have come into being, nor been able to function on a national scale but for the facilities provided by modern railways, buses, post and telegraph. The nationalist movement would have been inconceivable but for the fact that the railways made it possible for the people of different towns, villages, districts, and provinces to meet, to exchange views and decide upon programmes for the movement. But for the modern means of transport, no national conferences could have been held.

Railways and buses made it possible to spread progressive social and scientific ideas among the people. But for the modern means of transport, scientific and progressive literature (books, magazines, papers), could not have been quickly distributed throughout the country. Printed books for elementary schools were instruments for filtering education to the masses. Printed books might have been turned out in tens of thousands but, without their quick distribution among thousands of villages and towns which railways and motor buses could accomplish, these books would not have reached those centres. No mass education would have been possible without the services of modern means of transport.

The scientific and cultural gains of a single centre could be made national property by the aid of railways. Scientists, artists, sociologists, philosophers, and economists could bring the wealth of their knowledge and the delight of their art to the people if they could travel from place to place and could appear before them. Scientific and cultural conferences, where the quintessence of Indian intellect and artistic talent met, were possible only if such swift means of travel as railways and buses existed. Thus mass education as well as a culture, national in character and accessible to the nation, depended on railways as much as on other factors.

Prerequisites for their Sound Development

The lop-sided and limited character of the development of modern means of transport and communications in India prevented the full unfolding of the potential power of these means to accomplish a still closer social and economic integration and more rapid cultural advance of the Indian people. The problem of extensive and adequate expansion of those means was closely bound up with the problem of the political power in the hands of the Indian people, as also with that of a rapid development of the productive forces of the Indian society through a scientific plan of economic reconstruction which would have been fully possible if society, as a whole, owned all means of production.

References

1 Refer Laski.
2 Refer D. H. Buchanan, Gadgil, O'Malley.
3 Buchanan, p. 176.
4 Soni, p. 24.
5 O'Malley, pp. 269-70.
6 Karl Marx, pp. 62-3.
7 Joan Beauchamp, p. 42.
8 Basil Mathews quoted in O'Malley, p. 248.

CHAPTER IX

THE ROLE OF MODERN EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIAN NATIONALISM

Education, its Social Significance

No SOCIETY can ever exist without economic activity. It must carry on the production process even with a view to maintaining the bare physical existence of its members. To be able to produce, that is to transform elements of nature into forms suitable for meeting the needs of men, it must gather an understanding of Nature i.e. it must achieve scientific knowledge. It is in the process of social practice of man for biological existence that mechanics, physics, chemistry, agronomy and other sciences developed. Men, associated in big or small groups, applied this scientific knowledge and evolved technology i.e. such means of production as the plough and the tools of the handicraft industry. In recent times humanity has invented such marvellous means of production as machinery driven by steam, electricity and even by atomic energy.

Every society, however backward, therefore, always possessed some scientific knowledge and technology. It always possessed a philosophy or a world outlook, however crude it might be.

Pre-British Indian society which had been existing for centuries was, therefore, not without any scientific culture. It lived by agriculture and handicrafts, which presupposed such sciences as astronomy, agronomy, mathematics and mechanics. Pre-British Indian society also possessed the science of medicine.

Since pre-British Indian society stood at a low level of economic development, the amount of scientific knowledge it had attained and accumulated was small. The Indian people had done pioneering work in sciences such as mathematics, chemistry, and medicine, centuries before most of the modern peoples of the world ever awoke to civilized life. But, thereafter, Indian society became stabilized almost at the same economic and cultural level for a long period and the Indian people did not progress appreciably. It evolved, during this period various interpretations of the idealistic philosophy it had formulated in the Upanishads. It, however, did not accomplish any striking thing in the sphere of natural sciences and technology.

By introducing modern education in India, the British brought the Indian people in contact with the extensive and profound achievements of the modern west in the sphere of scientific and social scientific knowledge.

> 'The time has arrived when the ancient debt of civilization which Europe owes to Asia is about to be repaid; and the sciences, cradled in the East and brought to maturity in the West, are now by a final effort to over-spread the world.'[1]

Pre-British Indian Culture, Two Misconceptions

There were two misconceptions about the pre-British culture in India. The national-chauvinist Arya Samaj idealized India's past even to the fantastic extent of claiming that all knowledge, scientific, social, and spiritual, was achieved by the Aryans and lay deposited in the immortal Vedas. The Arya Samaj claimed that all marvellous discoveries and inventions of modern times, all principles and conclusions of modern physics, chemistry, biology and engineering, were stated in the Vedas only if one knew how to interpret them appropriately.

The national-chauvinist claim of the Arya Samaj arose out of its ignorance that all knowledge is historically conditioned, that, though growing, it is finite at a given moment and that its depth and extent depend upon the level of social development which a people has reached. Pre-British Indian society, during all phases of its existence, stood at a low level of socio-economic development and, therefore, the knowledge possessed by it was less than that achieved by modern humanity.

Lord Macaulay, on the other hand, suffered from a misconception of the contrary nature. He contemptuously dismissed all Indian culture as a colossal mass of unadulterated superstition. He inquired whether the British should 'countenance at the public expense medical doctrines which would disgrace an English farriar, astronomy which would move laughter in girls at an English boarding-school, history, abounding with kings thirty feet high and reigns thirty thousand years long and geography made up of seas of treacle and seas of butter....'[2]

This was a one-sided picture of India's past culture. It is true that superstition is rampant on an extensive scale in every backward society but, along with superstition, there is always some element of scientific knowledge in every society. As mentioned before, society to exist must produce and production presupposes technology and scientific knowledge, however meagre. No society can, otherwise, survive. The very fact that the Indian society could exist for centuries in the Pre-British period shows that it possessed scientific knowledge. The task of every society is to critically carry over the culture of the past, i.e. to assimilate the scientific elements in the culture of the past. Macaulay's uncritical denial was as unhistorical as the uncritical idealizing of India's past culture by the Arya Samaj.

Education in Pre-British India

Hindu society was caste-stratified and, in the caste scheme which assigned a specific social function to each caste, it was the Brahmin caste which had the exclusive right to preach religious doctrines, to officiate as priests, and to function as teachers. As such, they alone had the privilege to study all higher religious and secular knowledge. Other castes were debarred by religious edicts enforced by the Hindu state from all higher studies. The Brahmins studied in special seminaries started for the purpose, such as Tols, Vidyalayas and Chatuspathis. The medium of instruction was Sanskrit, the sacred language of the Hindus, in which only, all religious and higher secular knowledge was expressed.[3]

For the common people, there were, in every village and town, vernacular schools which taught mainly reading, writing, and rudiments of arithmetic. These schools also imparted religious instruction to the pupils. These schools were generally taken advantage of by the sons of the traders. Women, the lower castes and agriculturists hardly received any education. Thus education among the Hindus, in pre-British India, was extremely restricted and for all, except the Brahmins, very poor in content. The Brahmins enjoyed the monopoly of all higher education.

Further, this education, as a part of the entire culture of the Hindu society, controlled and administered by the Brahmins, was a means of training the pupil in accepting the existing caste structure of the Hindu society, in believing in the infallibility of the Vedas, and of the Brahmins, in interpreting these Vedas. It also taught the pupil the virtue of unconditional allegiance to elders, to parents, to teachers, to the king. In fact, education was a means of making the individual accept and conform to the hierarchic structure of society and completely subordinate his individuality to it.

Among the Muslims in pre-British India, the higher education was not a monopoly of a section. This was due to the democratic character of Islam. Any Muslim could study at the Madarasa. However, all higher education was imparted in Arabic, an alien language in India, since the Koran was written in that language. There were, however, schools which, in addition to the Koran, taught vernaculars, Persian, 'the language of Islamic culture and administration', and other subjects.

> 'The systems' (the Hindu and the Muslim) 'had much in common. They taught in a language or languages foreign to the people at large, they drew their strength from their association with religion, and, being based on unchanging authority, they discouraged the spirit of free inquiry and resisted change. But there was one respect in which they differed profoundly. While the Hindu schools were designed for one favoured class of the community... Muslims schools... were open without let to all who confessed that there was but one God and Muhammad was his Prophet.'[5]

Neither individuality nor a rationalist outlook could develop among the pupils in these schools in pre-British India. The education imparted was to make the pupils staunch Hindus or Muslims, uncritical subscribers to their respective religions and social structures sanctioned by those religions.

The introduction of modern education was an event of great historical significance for India. It was definitely a progressive act of the British rule.

Introduction of Modern Education

Three main agencies were responsible for the spread of modern education in India. They were the foreign Christian missionaries, the British government and the progressive Indians.

The Christian missionaries, who did extensive work in the sphere of the spread of modern education in India, were inspired mainly by a proselytizing spirit, to spread Christianity among the Indian people. They sincerely believed that their campaign to convert the Indians was a civilizing mission. They attacked polytheism and the caste inequalities among the Hindus, for, Christianity fundamentally stood for one God and social equality. These missionaries were among the pioneers of modern education in India. While imparting modern secular education, the educational institutions started by them also gave religious instruction in Christianity. These principally secular schools served as centres to bring together the Indians and then preach Christianity to them. It happened, however, that while the overwhelming majority of the students who attended these institutions imbibed modern education, a very small fraction of them became Christians. Though their principal aim in starting these institutions was religious, these missionary organizations played an important role in spreading modern education among the Indians.[6]

The British government was, however, the principal agent in disseminating modern education in India. It established a network of schools and colleges in India which turned out tens of thousands of educated Indians versed in modern knowledge. In spite of the limitations and distortions of the education imparted which were the object of criticism of Indian nationalism, the fact remains that Britain by spreading modern education in India, liberal and technical, even due to its own needs, objectively played a progressive role.

The introduction of modern education in India was primarily motivated by the political-administrative and economic needs of Britain in India. It was not a mere accident that by the middle of the nineteenth century, especially under Lord Dalhousie, important beginnings of the inauguration of modern education in India were made. It was by that time that Britain brought under its rule a substantial portion of the Indian territory. It was also then that the industrial products of Britain began to flow into India and the trade between Britain and India reached, though to Britain's advantage, huge proportions.[7]

The British government organized a huge, extensive, well-ramified state machinery to administer the conquered territory. A large number of educated individuals was required to staff this immense machinery of political rule. It was not possible to secure this supply of educated people from Britain herself. It, therefore, became necessary to establish schools and colleges in India to turn out educated people who would staff the administrative apparatus of the British rule. The British government entrusted the key posts in this state machinery to the British and filled the subordinate posts with educated Indians.

For the expanding trade with India, also for the industries which she increasingly established in India, Britain needed clerks, managers, and agents who knew English.

This political-administrative and economic necessity mainly urged the British government to establish schools and colleges in India, where modern education which alone could meet the needs of a modern nation was imparted. These educational institutions provided clerks for the government and commercial offices, lawyers versed in the structure and processes of the new legal system, doctors trained in the modern medical science, technicians, and teachers.

There were other motives also which encouraged some of the British statesmen and leaders of English thought to endorse the introduction of modern education in India. These enlightened Britishers were convinced that the British culture was the best and the most liberal in the world and that if India, South Africa, and, later on, the entire world, were 'anglicized' culturally, it would pave the way for the social and political unification of the world. The British were inspired by an almost missionary zeal for spreading British education and culture. Macaulay belonged to this group of

British statesmen headed by Cecil Rhodes. In his will, Cecil Rhodes 'sketched his idea of the British Empire, and beyond its bounds of the great commonwealth of peoples linked together by the bond of English language and culture, serving the cause of peace among men. His aim was "the extension of British rule throughout the world, the occupation by British settlers of the entire Continent of Africa, the Holy Land, the Valley of the Euphrates... the whole of South Africa... the ultimate recovery of the United States of America as an integral part of the British Empire, the inauguration of a system of Colonial representation in the Imperial Parliament, which may tend to weld together the disjointed members of the Empire, and, finally, the foundation of so great a Power as to hereafter render wars impossible and promote the best interests of humanity."[8]

This was a programme of 'anglicizing' the world and thereby achieving the empire and world political and social unity of peoples under the guidance and leadership of Britain.

A group of prominent Englishmen, Mountstuart Elphinstone among them, also held that English education 'would make the Indian people gladly accept the British rule.' It was hoped that 'The enlightenment due to education would reconcile the people to British rule and even engender a sense of attachment to it. Education in English, according to Mountstuart Elphinstone, was a political necessity. The British were exposed to danger from the precarious foundation of their government, owing to the total separation between them and the people, and the only means of ensuring its stability was to communicate their own principles and opinions by the diffusion of a rational education. The spirit of English literature, Trevelyan wrote in 1938 in his brochure on the Education of the People of India, could not but be favourable to the English connection, forgetting that it is the literature of freedom and calculated to inspire a spirit of nationalism and independence.'[9]

Thus the political and economic necessity of British capitalism in India, together with an almost fanatical belief in the role of Britain as the Messiah to civilize and unify the world by a world-scale dissemination of British culture, prompted the introduction of modern education in India.

The third powerful agency in spreading modern education in India was the Indians themselves. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the pioneer of progressive modern education in India. He hailed the English education as the key to the treasures of scientific and democratic thought of the modern west. He declared that perpetuation of the old system of education in India would only perpetuate superstition and authority. 'If it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge, the Baconian philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of the schoolmen, which was the best calculated to perpetuate their ignorance. In the same manner, the Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness if that had been the policy of the British Legislature.'[10]

Subsequently, numerous organizations such as the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Aligarh Movement, and individuals like Deshmukh, Chiplunkar, Agarkar, Maganbhai Karamchand, Karve, Tilak, Gokhale, Malavia, Gandhi and others worked towards the establishment of educational institutions, both for men and women, imparting modern education throughout the country. It is true that they were critical of some aspects of that education, still, they recognized its value, and with some changes, supported its spread among the people. Some of them criticized its secular nature and, in the institutions they organized, added religious instruction. The Benares Hindu University organized by Pandit Malaviya and the Aligarh University organized by Syed Ahmed Khan were the outstanding instances of this movement. Some criticized the textbooks used in the government or missionary schools as promoting an attitude of depreciation of India's past or for being divorced from the realities of life, and prepared and substituted different textbooks which would kindle national self-respect among the Indians. However, almost all of them retained the essential core of modern education, its anti-authoritarian liberal note, its emphasis on individual liberty, its rejection of blind faith and stress on modern natural sciences. Even schools and colleges started by the Arya Samaj (Lajpat Rai Section), the militant foe of alien influences, accepted and taught modern education, only adding to it religious instruction, such as the teaching of the doctrine of the infallibility of the Vedas which, in fact, contradicted the very spirit of the liberal education which they imparted, the keynote of which was to appraise things by experiment and reason.

Unhealthy Reactions to Modern Education

Modern education created an unhealthy reaction among a section of the Indians who received it.

The first contact with the modern western culture through new education was electrifying. The essential rational and liberation core of this culture was not however comprehended by a section of the Indians. While correctly discarding old norms and criteria which only imposed fetters on the free creative initiative of the individual, the educated Indian failed to substitute, in their place, rational norms and criteria to guide individual conduct. He misunderstood freedom from all irrational taboos as freedom to do anything that a chance impulse incited. He mistook freedom as license to drink or to indulge in unhealthy modes of sex life. While overthrowing old authoritarian conceptions of social life, he could not evolve a positive social conception. His reaction to the old millieu was predominantly negative. He saw through the irrationality of the old forms and outlooks but could not build up a new positive progressive theory for individual and social practice. This often bred anarchy in personal life and brought about his isolation from the people. Instead of feeling the historical responsibility of the intellectual vanguard to guide the people from a stationary and superstitious social existence to a progressive democratic free national life, he developed an unheroic contempt for them, for their social and cultural backwardness. A chasm developed between him and the people. He branded the people as 'barbarous', the people called him 'anglicized' and 'denationalized'.

Western culture did not recommend unhealthy personal habits or antipathy to the common people. What modern rationalism demanded, was the development of a rational outlook on life, healthy personal habits, rejection of blind faith and a critical attitude to all cultures and social institutions of the past, implying thereby that whatever was of permanent value in those cultures and institutions should be assimilated and whatever was found erroneous in the light of the reinforced knowledge of contemporary society, or had outlived its historical necessity and therefore did not correspond to the needs of a changed social situation, be rejected. Individual liberty, social equality, collective progress, reason as the supreme criterion to judge ideas and institutions, intense nationalism—these, in fact, constituted the cornerstone of western Liberalism. In spite, of the fact that some of these principles were abstractly formulated and were only partially realized, due to capitalist conditions of social existence,[11] their enunciation was a landmark in the social and cultural evolution of mankind and signified progress from Medievalism to modern capitalism, a historically higher form of society.

There was a vital reason why such a phenomenon as a section of the educated Indians shaking off healthy mental and moral restraints and exhibiting an uncritical contempt for everything Indian, appeared. The restrictions imposed on individual liberty by the medieval social structure, authoritarian at its very pore, by the iron rule of caste and social custom, were so stifling that, under the first impact of the social libertarian ideology of the west, the educated Indians —only a section of them though—rebelled against the idea of any restraint. Feeling a frenzied yearning to be free from extant chains, both physical and mental, imposed on him by an authoritarian social system and ideology, he temporarily and temporarily only, though social reaction exaggerated this first aberration, mistook the doctrine of liberty advocated by western Liberalism as the cult of anarchic living. Such blind reactions mark all transitional periods in social history.[12]

Serious defects in new education further accentuated this phenomenon. It gave exaggerated importance to the English language which led to the development of a social gulf between the educated Indian and the masses. This education was greatly divorced from the real life of the Indian people and problems viewed from the standpoint of Indian national progress. It glorified and idealized the British rule and depreciated India's past instead of giving a critical scientific appraisal of it. It overemphasized the study of the English history. It did not awaken any national pride. All this further prompted the educated Indian to disorient from the Indian people, to feel himself identified with the ruling nation and harbour a contempt for the common people.

Social and religious reaction, of course, utilized this mis-assimilation of the great rationalist and democratic culture of the west by this section of educated Indians, to denounce western culture itself. It tried to misrepresent western culture as giving a free passport to drink, unhealthy sex life, arrogant anti-social and anti-national egoism. Reaction, thereby, sought to entrench itself against the critical intellectual attack on itself by the social liberatarian and rationalist doctrines which formed the core of modern western culture. In the name of social discipline, it justified its oppressive bans and taboos on individual freedom, bans and taboos which were a veritable strait-jacket for the free physical, mental and emotional life of the individual. In the name of nationalism, it strove to conserve the past with its archaic social institutions and superstitious mental outlooks.

It should be noted, however, that this blind reaction was only an ephemeral phenomenon.

Growth of Modern Education upto 1854

Before 1813, there were sporadic efforts to introduce modern education by missionary groups and the East India Company. The extent of the combined educational work of these two agencies was extremely limited and had significance only as pioneering work.

The Charter Act of 1813 marked a point of departure in the East India Company towards the education of its Indian subjects. Under it, the Company, for the first time, assumed state responsibility for education. It provided that 'a sum of not less than a lac of rupees in each year shall be set apart,' for educational purposes.[13]

There were two schools of thought among the Britishers regarding the type of education to be imparted to the Indians. The first school of thought known as the Anglicists of which Macaulay was the most outstanding protagonist, advocated 'the substitution of Western culture for the Indian' and set, as the aim of the education, the creation of a class of Indians who would be 'Indian in blood and colour but English in tastes, in opinion, in morals and in intellect'.[14] This school further stood for English as the medium of education. It was supported in this view by the missionaries, the younger officials of the Company and progressive Indians like Raja Ram Mohan Roy.

The second school known as the Orientalists, while agreeing to the programme of the dissemination of western sciences and knowledge among the Indians, however, staunchly advocated the encouragement of Sanskrit and Arabic literature. The adherents of the second school were however split into two groups over the question of the medium of instruction. One group argued in favour of classical languages such as Sanskrit and Arabic being adopted as the medium of education. This group was especially strong in Bengal and was influenced by the views of Warren Hastings and Minto. The other group was led by the Munro and Elphinstone and was strong in Bombay. It held that western education could reach the mass of the people only if it was imparted in vernaculars.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his group were enthusiastic supporters of Macaulay and his compeers. The Raja submitted a memorial to the Governor-General in 1823 wherein he urged the government to 'promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy, with other useful sciences'.[15] Raja's attitude in this matter was the forerunner of the attitude of the Liberal school in Indian politics which subsequently evolved and which idealized western education and was criticized by other nationalist groups (Pal, Ghose, Gandhi and others) for depreciating Indian culture.

The controversy was settled in favour of the Anglicists when Lord Bentinck, the Governor-General of India, endorsed and adopted their view in 1935. The resolution published by the government stated that 'the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India, and that all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English education alone...' and further 'that all the funds be henceforth employed in imparting to the native population a knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of the English language'.[16]

The educational policy of the Company's government neglected mass education and indigenous village schools which imparted elementary education, however limited and crude, to the people. The Anglicists believed in the Downward Filtration Theory i.e. a theory which held that knowledge would percolate from the educated classes to the masses through the independent effort of the former.

In Bombay, the advocates of vernaculars as the medium of education suffered a defeat. Jagannath Shankerseth, one of the three Indians on the Board of Education, the others being Framjee Cowasjee and M. I. Mackba, stated in the Minute he submitted: 'I am persuaded that the vernacular languages possess advantages superior to English as the medium of communicating useful knowledge to the people of western India. It cannot be denied that they must have less difficulty in understanding whatever is communicated to them in their own language, than in a foreign language. I am far from wishing to discourage the study of English, but I believe it to be beyond the reach of the masses of people'.[17]

The controversy in Bombay had one result. Though English as the exclusive medium of instruction was adopted at the collegiate stage, the use of the vernaculars was retained at the secondary stage.

From Wood's Dispatch to Lord Curzon's University Act

The first phase in the history of modern education in India ended with Wood's Dispatch, 1854, which resolved all controversies of the period round the subject of education into well defined attitudes. The Dispatch was usually called the Magna Charta of Indian education because of some larger tasks it set to the government. However its implementing in subsequent years was declared inadequate by Indian critics.

The Dispatch stated that the educational system in India was organized for the triple object of (1) spreading western culture, (2) securing properly trained servants for the public administration, and (3) doing their duty to the sovereign by the Indian subjects.[18]

Regarding the controversy about the medium of instruction, the Dispatch reached the conclusion that (1) English should be used as the medium of instruction at the collegiate stage, (2) secondary education was to be imparted both through English and through modern Indian languages, and (3) modern Indian languages were to be encouraged with a view to making them the media in course of time for imparting higher education. The Indian critics of the government blamed it for not implementing properly the last two conclusions.[19] The Dispatch further stated that the government should assume direct responsibilities for the education of the masses (thus abandoning the former Downward Filtration Theory) and women.

It was Wood's Education Dispatch of 1854 which laid the foundation of the structure of the modern educational system in India. The growth of education gathered momentum after 1854.

It was however after 1880 that the rapid advance of education took place in India. From 1880, large-scale educational work was organized in the country by the missionaries, the Education Department of the government and progressive Indians. Among these three agencies, Indian private enterprise had the largest share in the spread of education in 1901-2.[20]

The Deccan Education Society, established in the Bombay Presidency in the seventies by Tilak and Agarkar, was an outstanding instance of educational enterprises started by the nationalist Indians on their own initiative. The founders of the Society recognized the significant role of modern education in the social, political, and cultural advance of the Indian people. They also aimed at gathering round the Society a band of self-sacrificing educated Indians who would consecrate their lives to educational and other forms of national work. In fact, a number of patriotic Indians including Tilak and Gokhale, two of the most outstanding leaders of Indian nationalism, were associated with the activities of the Society.

Special reference may be made to Vijapurkar, who at the end of the nineteenth century started at Talegaon a Rashtriya School which was probably the first among the group of independent educational experiments made by the Indians, a forerunner of experiments such as Vidyapith and Vardha Educational Scheme which were conceived and organized in the subsequent period.

The school imparted technical education. Indian industries had appreciably developed by this time. The founder of the school was urged by the motive of providing technicians to these industries so that their dependence on foreign technicians might be diminished. It is also possible that another motive prompting the organizer was to meet the need of the growing terrorist movement in the country for technicians who could forge weapons for the movement.

The indigenous school system rapidly declined by the end of the nineteenth century. This was mainly due to the operation of two causes namely (1) absence of financial support from the state and (2) because only those who received education in new schools were eligible for posts. Even private employers preferred them.

Third Phase, upto 1921

The period between 1901 and 1921 was a period of political unrest, of the Bengal Partition Movement, the Morley-Minto Reforms, World War I, the Home Rule and Non-Co-operation Movements. It was a period of the great national awakening of the Indian people, of their rising political consciousness and increasing critical attitude to the measures of the British and increasing critical attitude to the measures of the British government, in the spheres of politics, economics and education.

There had been a phenomenal growth of education between 1880 and 1901. Lord Curzon and others criticized this growth from the standpoint of quality. They remarked that the quality of education had appreciably deteriorated since 1880, that educational institutions under private control were inefficient, that the educated Indians had an innate incapacity to assimilate foreign culture and that the educational system should be remodelled with a view to turning out men of character.[21]

The Indian critics, on the other hand, stressed the vital importance of quantitative expansion of education in the interests of the general culture of the Indian people. According to them, what was required was not the limiting of the education out of anxiety for quality but 'a very rapid expansion of higher education on a voluntary basis and the introduction of compulsory elementary education for the masses.'

> Let not Government imagine that unless the education imparted by colleges is the highest . . . it is likely to be useless and even perni-

> cious; and secondly let not the achievements of our graduates in the intellectual field be accepted as the sole or even the most important test to determine the utility of this education. I think... that, in the present circumstances of India, all wesern education is valuable and useful... To my mind, the greater work of western education in the present state of India is not so much the encouragement of learning as the liberation of the Indian mind from the thraldom of old-world ideas... For this purpose, not only the highest but all western education is useful.'[22]

The Indian critics also stood for full freedom for private enterprise in the field of establishing educational institutions.

Extremists like Pal and the Ghose brothers attacked the education as it was imparted as denationalizing. Their criticisms are referred to later.

In spite of almost universal Indian opposition, the Indian Universities Act of 1904 was passed, which, among other restricting provisions, made the conditions for affiliation of a college to a University stricter. It also vested in the government power regarding the rules to be framed by the University Senate, also power to nominate the majority of Fellows and to require approval for affiliation or disaffiliation of colleges. The critics remárked that, under the Act, the Universities were reduced merely to a Department of State.

A further setback, from the standpoint of the expansion of education, was caused by the revised Grant-in-Aid Codes framed between 1904 and 1908. This adversely affected the growth of secondary schools. Finally, the defeat of Gokhale's Bill for introducing compulsory education (described as the Magna Charta of primary education) dissolved all hope of making the Indian masses educated.

The growing discontent at the educational policy of the government steadily kindled among the Indians a desire for the control of the Department of Education itself. It also created among some of the leaders an urge to organize new independent educational experiments.

Fourth Phase, 1921-1939

Under Dyarchy, the Department of Education was transferred to the control of Indian Ministers in 1921. Under it, the Provincial governments had greater freedom to adopt and implement programmes of educational expansion. There was, as a result of this, an appreciable growth in the spread of education after 1921.

Limitations of financial resources, however, soon restricted this growth. This discontinuance of specific grants to education sanctioned by the Government of India from 1901-21 reinforced by the economic difficulties born of the world economic depression, made the carrying through of big schemes of educational extension difficult.

There was, however, a steady expansion of education between 1921 and 1937. The following figures portray this growth.

Statistics of Education 1921-2 and 1936-7

Type of Institution	**No. of Institutions**		**No. of Scholars**	
	1921-2	1936-7	1921-2	1936-7
Universities ..	10	15	Figures not available	9,697
Arts Colleges ..	165	271	45,418	86,273
Professional Colleges ..	64	75	13,662	20,045
Secondary Schools ..	7,530	13,056	11,06,803	22,87,872
Primary Schools ..	1,55,017	1,92,244	61,09,752	1,02,24,288
Special Schools ..	3,344	5,647	1,20,925	2,59,269
Total for Recognized Institutions	1,66,130	2,11,308	73,96,560	1,28,88,044
Unrecognized Institutions ..	16,322	16,647	4,22,165	5,01,530
Grand Total	1,82,452	2,27,955	78,18,725	1,33,89,574

(The above figures are for British India excluding Burma).

In addition to the Indian control of the Department of Education, there were other factors which explain the expansion of education. The tremendous social and political awakening among the people during this period was one among these factors.[23]

The rapid extension of mass education was one of the most significant events during this period. A number of Compulsory Education Acts were passed in most of the provinces. Such Acts, where they existed, were more or less given effect to during this period. The following figures reflect the advance in primary education from 1922 to 1927.

Statistics of Primary Education

	1921-2	1926-7
Number of Primary Schools	1,55,017	1,84.829
Number of Pupils in Primary Schools	61,09,752	80,17,923
Expenditure on Primary Education (Direct)	Rs. 4,94,69,080	Rs. 6,75,14,802

After 1927 the rate of progress in primary education began to decline. The economic depression which raged in subsequent years was one of the main causes. It compelled the abandonment of a number of schemes for the extension of primary education. The other reason for the slowing down was the recommendation of the Hartog Committee to the government to concentrate more on consolidation than 'diffusion' of primary education. This view was generally criticized by non-official opinion which favoured quantitative growth of literacy and education. 'Education must pour and not trickle.'

> 'Not only the example of other countries but their educational history also shows that rapid expansion must precede all other educational reforms. India has never realized the greatest truth in mass education that slow progress is no progress at all.'[24]

The period between 1921 and 1937 witnessed a number of educational experiments by distinguished Indian educationists and outstanding leaders of Indian nationalism. Vishwa-Bharati started by Poet Rabindranath Tagore, the S.N.D.T. Women's University organized by Karve, the Kashi Vidyapith, the Jamia Millia, the Gujerat Vidyapith and the Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapith, were principal among these enterprises.

The period after 1937 was marked by three outstanding events which had a great effect on the life of the Indian people: (1) the introduction of Provincial Autonomy in 1937, (2) the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, and (3) the political storm which broke out in August 1942, in India and the subsequent developments.

The introduction of Provincial Autonomy, on the whole, gave an impetus to the growth of primary education. However, such experiments as the Vidya Mandir Scheme of Education based on Gandhian ideology sponsored by the Congress Ministers in some provinces, provoked severe criticism from sections of the intelligentsia as well as the non-Hindu communities. The other two events had a very far-reaching effect on the economic, political, social, and cultural life of the entire Indian people.

Modern Education in India, main Criticisms

Since modern education was introduced in India to meet the needs of Britain as already enumerated above, its progress had been restricted and its character, from the standpoint of the progress of the Indian people, unsatisfactory. Since the main purpose of the inauguration of modern education was to supply the English-knowing personnel to the British apparatus, mass education had been throughout seriously neglected.

After more than a century of the British rule, 94 per cent of the Indian population remained illiterate in 1911, and 92 per cent in 1931. The number of students receiving education in primary and secondary schools amounted to 13.5 million only or 4.9 per cent of the entire population in 1934-5. Even of these, two-thirds who studied in primary schools did not study beyond the first year and less than one-fifth reached the final year.[25]

> 'The majority of children in primary schools are under instruction for between three and four years only; and for the greater portion of the time, four out of every five linger in the lowest class. In consequence, there is a tendency to lapse into illiteracy after the short period of instruction comes to a close.'[26]

The illiteracy and resultant ignorance among the masses inevitably obstructed social, political, and economic progress.

The number of students studying in higher education institutions was 159,254 in 1941-2 or about 0.5 per cent of the population.

The economic development of a backward country demands educational cadres trained in technical studies. In 1934-35, the students graduating in engineering, agriculture or commerce numbered only 960. 'The greatest shortage has been in technical education. In such fields as agriculture, commerce and engineering, one sparsely settled American state such as Iowa, with one per cent of the population of British India, has more students'.[27]

The costly nature of education was another target of nationalist criticism. The Indian people were extremely poor and could not afford to pay for a costly education. It was because of this that the University Reform measure of Lord Curzon, making education though more efficient yet more costly, met popular opposition. In fact, the Indian nationalists suspected Lord Curzon of the desire to limit education, under the cover of making it efficient, since he thought that the spread of education 'bred sedition'. Even the non-Indians had noticed that the British officials attributed political ferment to the spread of English education. 'Many officials in India sincerely believed that education would increase unrest and make the problem of governing more difficult... the chief argument, however, was always financial'.[28] All higher education, because of its cost, had been inaccessible to the great majority of the Indian people.

The Indian nationalists criticized the government for insufficient expenditure on education which always remained 'the Cinderella of the Services'. While one-third of the total State revenue was, on the average, spent on the military, education was assigned a scanty sum.

Further, the Indian nationalists criticized this education from many points. According to them, it was divorced from the actualities of Indian life. It did not give a true picture of Indian life, of the political servitude and of the real causes of the economic and cultural backwardness of Indian society. It did not pose Indian problems or offer their solution from the Indian national standpoint. It gave a distorted account of India's past history, glorified the British conquerors of India and portrayed the British as civilizers of India. It tended to weaken national pride and self-respect. Further, as this education was transmitted in English, a foreign language, to suit the needs of the British, it retarded the rapid assimilation of knowledge and created a chasm between the educated Indian and the common people of India. The Indian nationalists criticized the methods and organization of the educational system as well.

> 'The neglect of mass education merely showed that the new rulers of India had not come to the country to indulge in "social uplift"; and the excessive importance attached to English was the natural consequence of their desire to economize in administration by creating on the spot a class of minor officials instead of importing every clerk and civil servant from England.
>
> '...Its (the educational system) object was... to impress on middle class Indian youths the glory and grandeur of Britain and to train them to be competent servants of a foreign bureaucracy. It was vocational education with a vengeance: vocational education... which threw the weight of the curriculum on such matters as English syntax, Shakespearean prosody and the dates of the kings and queens, who had reigned over England.'[29]
>
> 'The British Government in India has, from the very beginning, tried to shape and control the course of public education, and the motive has always been to strengthen the foundations of their political authority in the country.'[30]

Various attempts at organizing parallel educational systems on national lines were made by Indian nationalist groups but they did not meet with any appreciable success.

There were reasons why the schemes of national education did not succeed. Since degrees and diplomas of government Universities were generally necessary for securing posts both in private as well as government services, independent national educational institutions not affiliated to the government Universities did not draw a large number of students. The demise of the Gujerat Vidyapith started by Gandhi in Ahmedabad was an instance of this. The Snatakas or the graduates of this college were as a rule not considered equals of the graduates of the Bombay University even by the Congress-minded employers.

Further, the Indian nationalists were never unanimous about the principle on which a scheme of national education was to be constructed. Some like Malaviya, Gandhi and the Arya Samajists, found fault with the secular character of the education given in official schools and colleges. They advocated religious instruction (Gita for the Hindus and Koran for the Muslims) as an integral part of education. Leaders like Jawaharlal preferred purely secular education since education should have a rational basis while religion rested on faith and intuition.

In fact, in attacking the secular nature of official education, leaders like Gandhi attacked thereby the very progressive element in that education. Their suggestion to incorporate religious instruction in the curricula of education was a reactionary one. Gandhi evolved the Vidya Mandir Scheme, a scheme of national education for India. He described that scheme as a polytechnique scheme of education, since it combined theoretical education with industry with a view to achieving an all-sided development of the individual The principle of the polytechnique education was a progressive one but when that idea was propounded in Europe, it meant an education based on the union of modern theoretical education and modern industry. Gandhi, on the other hand, in his scheme, combined modern education with an added religious veneering with pre-modern handicrafts. This looked like an unhistorical wedding of modern education (the product and guide of modern socio-economic conditions) and pre-modern crafts of a past era. Such educational schemes, being unreal and unhistorical, could not gain support. However, the main criticisms of the Indian nationalists were correct.

Mass education had drawn the attention of the Indian nationalists. 'It is obvious that an ignorant and illiterate nation can never make any solid progress and must fall back in the race of life. What we therefore want and want most urgently, is first of all, a widespread diffusion of elementary education, an effective and comprehensive system of primary schools for the masses; and the longer this work is delayed, the more insuperable will be our difficulties in gaining for ourselves a recognized place among the nations of the world'.[31] The necessity of mass education for national progress was categorically pointed out. Since then, increasing effort in that direction was made by all progressive Indians. Campaigns to liquidate illiteracy were organized. Student groups spent summer months in trips to villages to spread literacy among the villages. Night classes for workers were organized in cities for the same purpose. Such organizations as the Indian National Congress, the Social Service League, the All India Students' Organizations and many other institutions, increased their work in that direction. However, the task was so colossal that they could only just touch the fringe of it.

Its Progressive Essense

In spite of the defects already enumerated, the introduction of modern education in India was a progressive act of the British rule. It was secular in character, liberal in essence, open to all, irrespective of caste or creed, unlike the education in the pre-British period. But above all, it was the key which opened the great treasures of rationalist and democratic thought of the modern West to the Indians. ch 1 or Ch 2

It was not a mere accident that the pioneers and all subsequent leaders of Indian nationalism came from the educated classes of the Indian society.

> 'The rising generation assimilated European teaching with astounding receptivity. They quickly became nationalists, democrats, and socialists. Cavour, Mazzini, Kossuth, Parnell, and Mill became their teachers and heroes. The English Government forbade European history of the nineteenth century to be taught in Indian schools. But already it was too late. The process could no longer be checked, and at this point it soon took a new turn. A more intimate acquaintance with European culture had been attained and it was no longer accepted uncritically.... The European writers who themselves criticized Europe.... Ruskin, Carlyle, Tolstoy, and others... played their part.'[32]

The British government was frequently alarmed at the spread of extreme political ideas among the educated Indians which they imbibed from the political literature of Europe due to their knowledge of English. It took administrative measures and regulated the influx of foreign literature into India. Sometimes, it prohibited such works as the *Life of Mazzini*, the leader of Italian nationalism. In spite of such obstruction by the British government to the spread of certain species of modern European thought, it must be admitted that it was the knowledge of English which helped the Indians to study modern European literature. Indian nationalism always struggled for the freedom of unhindered contact with modern European thought of all varieties.

Thus modern education played a contradictory double role. Introduced at the outset with a view to meeting the political and administrative needs of Britain and even to strengthening the bond of the British rulers and the Indian ruled, it also helped Indian nationalism in its struggle against that rule.

Indian Nationalism, No Offspring of Modern Education

A number of British statesmen and writers claimed that Indian nationalism was the product of the modern education which the Britishers introduced in India. They asserted that the urge for national freedom grew among the Indian people because modern education helped them to study and imbibe the liberation doctrines propounded by western authors. While recognizing the progressive role played by the introduction of modern education in India, it would be incorrect to conclude that Indian nationalism was the child of this education.

Indian nationalism was, in fact, the outcome of the new social material conditions created in India and the new social forces which emerged within the Indian society, as a result of the British conquest. It was the outcome of the objective conflict of interests, the interests of Britain to keep India politically and economically subjected to her and the interests of the Indian people for a free political, economic, and cultural evolution of the Indian society unhindered by the British rule.

Indian nationalism crystallized as a national movement in the latter half of the nineteenth century. By that time, educated classes grew in the country and, with the rise of Indian industries, the industrial bourgeoisie came into existence. These classes were the organizers of the national movement, which inscribed on its banner such demands as Indianization of Services, Protection for Indian Industries, Fiscal Autonomy. The movement arose out of the conflict of British and Indian interests in the economic and other spheres. This conflict of interests is the genetic cause of the Indian national movement.

> 'The Indian national movement arose... from the conditions of imperialism and its system of exploitation... the rise of the Indian bourgeoisie and its growing competition against the domination of the British bourgeoisie were inevitable, whatever the system of education; and if the Indian bourgeoisie had been educated only in the Sanskrit Vedas, in monastic seclusion from every other current of thought, they would have assuredly found in the Sanskrit Vedas the inspiring principles and slogans of their struggle.'[33]

In fact, left nationalist leaders like Bipin Chandra Pal and others *did* find in a reinterpreted Hinduism, a religion of nationalism and in Goddess Kali, a deified expression of this nationalism.

Different classes had their specific grievances against Britain. The industrialists desired freedom for unobstructed industrialization of India and protection for the native industries. The educated classes demanded the Indianization of Services, since the higher posts were mainly the preserve of the British. The agriculturists demanded reduction of the land tax. The workers demanded better conditions of work and a living wage. The nation as a whole demanded the freedom of association and press, assembly, elected legislatures, representative institutions, dominion status, home rule and finally complete Independence. It was out of these contradictions of interests of Britain and India that Indian nationalism grew. TM

It must however be recognized that the assimilation of modern democratic ideas of the west by many nationalist leaders with the help of modern education prompted them to give the national movement democratic forms and aim. Under their leadership, the nationalist movement did not aim, after securing Swaraj, at the rehabilitation of the monarchic forms of rule and authoritarian social systems which prevailed in pre-British India. The nationalist movement organized itself, on the whole, on modern liberal principles such as elections, democratic committees, decisions reached by a majority vote etc. It also visualized for a free India, representative institutions based on democratic principles.

Thus, modern education, indirectly if not directly gave a democratic direction to Indian nationalism.

Modern Education, its Advantages

The advantages of the knowledge of English were almost immeasurable. It gave access to modern English literature, one of the richest, if not the richest, literatures in the world. It was the literature of the British nation, the first modern nation in history which vanquished and overthrew medievalism as early as the end of the eighteenth century. In the struggle against medievalism, it laid the foundation of modern democratic, scientific, and rationalist culture which it further developed and enriched during its subsequent victorious existence. In its struggle against the absolutism of the medieval state based on the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings, it laid the foundation of the theory of the sovereignty of the people and the democratic state. In its struggle against the religious obscurantist ideology of the Middle Ages, it forged the weapon of modern Rationalism. In its struggle against serfdom and hierarchic medieval social structure based on the principle of heredity, it proclaimed the doctrine of individual liberty. Further, it developed a rich scientific and technological culture. It created modern natural sciences such as modern physics, chemistry, biology and agronomy. It also made a huge advance in medicine and engineering, and created a science of society, modern sociology.

From the sixteenth century onward, Britain produced giants of thought in every sphere of social endeavour. It produced Bacon, who gave the scientific method to study processes and phenomena, both social and natural—the method of induction. He declared practice as the source of scientific theory and the criterion to judge the validity of any theory. This gave a death blow to the theory of *a priori* reasoning and paved the way for rapid and real progress in the field of knowledge both of Nature and Society. Britain produced a galaxy of profound thinkers after Bacon such as Darwin, the disoverer of one of the most valuable scientific theories, the theory of evolution of organic life, especially of the human species, which dealt a fatal blow to the fantastic explanation of man's origin provided by religious fables; Spencer, the profound sociologist; Locke, the great philosopher; Godwin, the pioneer of philosophical anarchism; John Stuart Mill, the implacable foe of all authoritarianism and stalwart exponent of individual liberty and popular sovereignty; Adam Smith, the father of modern economic science; Newton, the brilliant mathematician, physicist, and philosopher; Carlyle and Ruskin, both ruthless critics of social injustices rampant in modern society, though exponents of reactionary social solutions of the problems, harking back to the past; Ricardo, perhaps the most daring and incisive of all British economists; Gibbon and Buckle, both outstanding historians of the modern epoch; Hobhouse, Rivers, Briffault, Gordon Childe and Ginsberg, outstanding sociologists; Bertrand Russell, the world-celebrated mathematician and philosopher; H. G. Wells, the colourful portrayer of the socio-historical and naturo-historical process of evolution and the brilliant and imaginative writer of fascinating social novels; Bernard Shaw, the immortal master of social satire; Eddington and Jeans, both astronomers of world renown; Haldane, the world-celebrated biologist now an Indian citizen, Aldous and Julian Huxley, Levy, and Bernal, the world-renowned scientists; and others. These giants of thought have, in different fields, enriched human knowledge and contributed to the building up of the rich modern world culture. Ch 2 → Why?

The educated Indian, who studied English democratic literature and imbibed its democratic principles, felt inspired to rebel against the reactionary social institutions and world outlook of a bygone era, such as caste and authoritarian social philosophies which sought to enslave the individual and suppress his free initiative. He also thought in terms of a free national existence of the Indian people on a democratic basis. This gave the Indian nationalist movement, the offspring of the colonial status of India under the British rule, a democratic objective. The movement also developed on a democratic basis, on the basis of such principles and methods as election and elected committees and such demands as the widening of franchise, freedom of press, speech and association, representative government, executive responsible to the people, etc.

The study of the English language thus provided an opportunity to study the social libertarian, natural-scientific and rationalist philosophical literature in that language. This study helped to build up a democratic and rationalist outlook. If the social libertarian philosophy became a weapon to achieve individual and national freedom, the rationalist philosophy became an instrument to liberate the mind from dark superstition, from the grip of a multitude of gods, and fatalism, and otherworldliness.

Indian literature, both Hindu and Muslim, of pre-British era did not include any work on nationalism. It was inevitable and can be historically explained by the fact that due to economic backwardness, the Indian people were not socially or politically integrated into a nation.

The study of the English language unfolded the treasures of democratic and nationalist thought crystallized in precious scientific works. The study of these works clarified, made more vivid and even fanned into fire, the nascent nationalism of the educated Indians which grew out of the conditions of subjection in which the Indian people lived under the British rule.

Further knowledge of the English language also brought within the reach of an educated Indian, the most vital portion of the scientific, philosophical, sociological, and literary-artistic achievements of non-English-speaking peoples.

Through English translations, he could study the philosophical systems of Democritus, Heraclitus, Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza, Descartes, Leibnitz, Kant, Comte, Nietzche, Hegel, Max Stirner, Benedetto Croce, Oswald Spengler, Karl Marx. He could also assimilate the social theories of Plato, Machiavelli Diderot, Holbach, Helvetius, Voltaire and other ideological lights of eighteenth century France and of Auguste Comte, Saint-Simon, socialist Marx and Engels, anarchist Bakunin, syndicalist Proudhon and others. He could enrich his scientific knowledge by studying, through translations, the works of non-English-speaking mathematicians, physicists, and philosophers of world fame such as Einstein, Dirac, Schrodinger, and Heisenberg. He could, through translations, enjoy the artistic creations of such non-English literary artists of the first rank as Chekhov, Dostoevski, Turgenev, Gogol, Maxim Gorky, Emile Zola, Balzac, Flaubert Guy De Maupassant, Anatole France, Victor Hugo, Moliere, Proust, Heine, Goethe, Ibsen, Maeterlinck, Sanders and others. Thus, an educated Indian through the study of English, could make the cultural achievements of the non-English-speaking peoples his property.

This imbibing of world culture helped the educated Indian not only to reinforce his knowledge enormously but also to develop a world outlook and perspective. It gave him a sense of unity of world development, a world sense. He was able to get rid of the isolationist conception or rather misconception of the Indian social development. He understood Indian national development as a part of world development. He became free from the error that the Indian society had its own independent and special law of development and was unconnected with world development. Without losing sight of national peculiarities, he recognized that the same laws which governed the development of other societies governed the Indian society also.

The new political and economic environs, created by the British conquest and rule in India, posed before the Indians problems which were quite new and could not be solved by theories and methods which the old Indian culture provided. For example, to solve the national economic tasks arising out of the new economic milieu such as greater industrialization of India and development of a prosperous agriculture, an Indian economist like Ranade, Gokhale, Gadgil, or K. T. Shah, turned to the theoretical works on economics of Adam Smtih, Ricardo, List, or Marx. Neither Chanakya, the ancient author of Artha Shastra, nor Vyas, the immortal composer of Mahabharata, could arm him with theoretical means to solve modern economic problems. Ch 3 [illegible]

The intelligentsia exercises great ideological influence on the people. In India, advanced intellectuals who imbibed modern scientific world knowledge through their study of English began to transmit it to their own people. A number of them translated into various vernaculars, works of outstanding scientific value, literary artistic merit, and political, economic and sociological importance. They also wrote independent books in vernaculars embodying thoughts and scientific information which they studied from the English books. This increasingly helped the non-English-knowing literary section of the people to gather wide knowledge of the world. Some of these intellectuals also spread new ideas and information even among the illiterate strata through talks and lectures. This helped in the broadening of the vision and enriching of the knowledge of the common people.

The English language did a great service as a medium of communication for the educated Indians throughout India to exchange views, on a national scale, on different subjects of social, political and scientific interest. It proved very valuable as a medium of expression at various national congresses and conferences especially in the earlier stages.

The progressive role of the introduction of modern education in India and of the resultant contact with modern culture was strikingly proved by the fact that practically all leaders of progressive movements, economic, political, social.

religious, or cultural, belonged to the English-educated intelligentsia. The pioneers and leaders of the ever expanding and deepening national movement were English-educatd Indians.

Prerequisites of its Healthy Development

In spite of the growth of a modern intelligentsia and an educated middle class, an overwhelming portion of the Indian people, however, remained illiterate. The principal reason for this was their great poverty. The liquidation of mass-illiteracy was, therefore, bound up with the problem of the removal of the mass poverty of the Indian people.

This great poverty of the Indian people, as we have seen, was the product of the colonial character of Indian economy, the resultant low development of the productive forces of the Indian society and, further, the prevailing system of land and other economic relationships. Elimination of mass poverty, therefore, implied national freedom, power in the hands of the mass of the Indian people instead of in those of vested interests, and a comprehensive plan of national socio-economic reconstruction. Such a plan could be fully realized only if society owned the means of production. The state of a free and economically prosperous country alone could evolve a financial budget such as could pay adequate attention to mass education and social services.

The problem of the complete solution of mass illiteracy and, further, the extensive spread of the rich scientific and artistic culture of the contemporary era among the Indian people was, thus, closely bound up with national feedom and an economic plan based on the social ownership of means of production.

References

1 Trevelyan, p. 168.
2 Macaulay's Minute, 1935, quoted by Thompson and Garratt, p. 661.
3 O'Malley, p. 138.
4 ibid., p. 138.
5 ibid., p. 139.
6 Syed Nurullah and Naik, p. 92.
7 Refer Thompson and Garratt.
8 Hans Kohn, pp. 94-5.

9 O'Malley, pp. 658-9.
10 Raja Ram Mohan Roy, pp. 471-4.
11 Laski, pp. 18ff.
12 Refer Hans Kohn, p. 117.
13 Syed Nurullah and Naik, p. 49.
14 Macaulay quoted by Margarita Barns, p. 176.
15 Syed Nurullah and Naik, p. 67.
16 *Selections from Educational Records*, Vol. I, pp. 130-1.
17 *Selections from Educational Records*, Vol. II, pp. 16-7.
18 Syed Nurullah and Naik, p. 179.
19 ibid., p. 181.
20 ibid.
21 ibid., p. xx.
22 Gokhale's Speeches, pp. 234-5.
23 *Report of the Hartog Committee*, p. 31; and *Quinquennial Review of the Progress of Education in India*, 1927-32, Vol. I, p. 3.
24 Parulekar, pp. 110-11.
25 Dutt, p. 78.
26 *Moral and Material Progress and Condition in India*, 1923-4, p. 227.
27 Buchanan, p. 479.
28 ibid., p. 480.
29 Shelvankar, pp. 54-5.
30 B. C. Pal quoted by Buch, 2, p. 150.
31 Gokhale, pp. 74-5.
32 Hans Kohn, p. 118.
33 Dutt, p. 271.

CHAPTER X

POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE UNIFICATION OF INDIA UNDER THE BRITISH RULE

Absence of Basic Political and Administrative Unity in Pre-British India

ONE OF the significant results of the British conquest of India was the establishment of a centralized state which brought about, for the first time in Indian history, a real and basic political and administrative unification of the country.

Such a unity was unknown in pre-British India, which was almost chronically divided into numerous feudal states, frequently struggling among themselves to extend their boundaries. It is true that attempts were made by outstanding monarchs like Ashoka, Samudragupta and Akbar, to bring the whole of India under a single state regime and administrative system. However, even when they succeeded in bringing a greater portion of India under their rule, the political and administrative unity achieved was of a nominal character only, since the legion of self-governing villages wherein the preponderant portion of the Indian population resided were not thereby affected. In fact, these villages, from times immemorial, had been so many self-governing republics. The village committee reinforced with the caste committees constituted the *de facto* government of the village population.

> 'The villages had an organization designed to make them self-supporting and self-governing. Their autonomy was part of a loosely organized system of government, in which the sovereign power left communal and local institutions to function independently, each in its limited sphere. Each village co-ordinated the social activities of its inhabitants and was an independent unit.[1]

The main reasons why effective political and administrative unification of India in the pre-British period did not take place, were the absence of a unified national economy and efficient, well-ramified, and extensive means of communications. The history of the rise of centralized states in European countries shows how the growth of such state structures is closely bound up with the growth of unified national economies and the development of rapid and efficient means of communications.[2]

It is true that a conception of unity of India existed and flourished in pre-British India. But this unity was conceived as the geographical unity of the country and the religio-cultural unity of the Hindus. India was 'both a geographical and cultural continuum'.[3]

As O'Malley remarked: 'Hinduism, in fact, produces certain unity between men who had no common language and who were socially atomized and politically divided, but who had common sympathies founded on the same religion'.[4]

The concept of the political unity of the entire Indian people did not and could not emerge under the given socio-historical circumstances. The people were not socially and economically integrated; they were, therefore, not integrated politically either.

The British established a state structure in India which was of a distinctly new type. It was highly centralized and ramified in the remotest corner of the country.

Legal Unification

The British established a uniform reign of law in the country. They enacted laws and codified them. These laws were applicable to every citizen of the state and were enforced by a hierarchically graded system of tribunals which constituted the judicial section of the state. Judicial officials appointed by the state interpreted and enforced the laws of the state incorporated into its various codes in every village, town, and city. There was thus established in the country a system of lower courts, district courts and high courts, finally culminating into the Federal Court and the Privy Council.

In establishing the new system of law and tribunals, the British had to supersede the customary law which prevailed in pre-British India and expropriate village and caste committees of their power to enforce the customary law which further varied from place to place in the absence of a uniform system of law.

The legal system introduced by the British was on the whole equalitarian in contrast to the customary law prevalent in pre-British India which discriminated between caste and caste, community and community. This was due to the fact that the customary law was governed by religion which sanctified hierarchially graded caste and other distinctions.

The new legal system was based on the democratic conception of equality of all citizens before the laws of the state. In pre-British India, a Brahmin offender was meted out a lighter punishment than a non-Brahmin offender for the same offence. Under the new law, all citizens, no matter what their caste or creed, were considered equal before law, the jurisdiction of which further covered the entire territory of the state. Thus, the British brought about a legal unification of the Indian people on a democratic basis for the first time in Indian history, in spite of some discriminative legislation in favour of the Europeans.

Administrative Unification

The British also accomplished another progressive act, namely the administrative unification of the country. They established hierarchically graded public services which brought about the administrative unification of the country. Thus were created, imperial, provincial, and subordinate services which formed the executive section of the centralized state. In pre-British India, even when a monarch brought under his rule the major part of the country, a real basic administrative unification of the country did not take place since the representatives and officials of the monarch, stationed in different parts of the kingdom, did not generally concern themselves with the life of the people beyond collecting land revenue from the collective village, levying troops, securing tribute due to the emperor from the townspeople through their principal representative and guilds or sometimes attending to irrigation and road construction. Caste and village committees were the *de facto* governments and administrative bodies so far as the individual village was concerned. These committees looked after the distribution of land among peasant families in the village, regulated relations between its members composed mainly of artisans and peasants, and attended to such matters as education, sanitation, adjudication of disputes, and others. The state only claimed its share of village produce and left its administration to the village community. This was in contrast to the new administrative system inaugurated by the British under which the state expropriated the village and caste committees of their functions and powers and undertook the responsibility of the administration of the inner affairs of the village which was now carried on by the official appointed by it and responsible not to the village community but to the centralized state. Thus, the self-governing village was transformed into a unit and a part of the single administrative system existing on a country-wide scale.

The estalishment of British rule in India brought about an extensive and basic political, administrative, and legal unification of the country for the first time in Indian history. Such a state structure became necessary to the new type of economy which came into existence in India under the British rule. The capitalist economic transformation of India broke up the multitude of separate village economies, welded the Indian people economically, through a system of exchange relations, and made contract the key basis of their economic relations. The British government created a new land system on a private property basis and introduced money economy. A uniform system of law had to be evolved to maintain and regulate the new land relations and contractual transactions such as purchase, sale, and mortgage of land resulting inevitably from the new system.

Establishment of Uniform Currency System

Under the British rule, all production in the country became commodity production. India was also linked with the world market more extensively than before. Both the internal and foreign trade of India increased in volume and scope. Further, modern industries on a capitalist basis steadily developed in the country. The new state had to enact a mass of laws to regulate the huge complex of contractual and other relations inevitably arising from such an economic state. Thus there came into existence a system of new laws, uniformly operating and governing all complex and multifold relations and transactions between the tenants and landlords, workers and employers, manufacturers, traders and bankers also laws determining the relations of India with other countries regarding perennially operating trade and other activities. The new economy also necessitated the introduction of a uniform currency system in the country.

The new state made education its responsibility. This became necessary since the new economy and administrative apparatus needed for their functioning a personnel trained in modern liberal, scientific, and technical education.

The new state established by the British unified India and the Indian people more comprehensively than any state during the pre-British period. The Indian people, for the first time, found a substantial sector of their economic and social life coming under the governance of a universally and equally operating system of law.

Unification, its Chief Defects

Though the British rule in India accomplished the political, legal, and administrative unification of the Indian people, there were a number of defects and limitations in the unification carried out. We will enumerate the chief among them.

First, though the process of bringing Indian territory more and more directly under a single state rule of the British continued till 1857, the Proclamation of Queen Victoria in that year declared the new policy of the British Crown which took over the government of India from the East India Company, of abandoning further annexation of the state territories of the surviving feudal princes. The surviving states which could have been liquidated by superior British power were perpetuated and transformed into so many reliable props of British ascendancy in India.

The perpetuation of the numerous, petty and big feudal states, had however the effect of restricting the historically progressive process of the political and administrative unification of India under a single state. India was divided into two parts, one governed by the princes, the other by the British government. Coupland made the following observation regarding this: 'Thus India was divided into two distinct parts, in which the basis and form of government were quite different'.[5] Coupland further remarked: 'This division between the Indian states and British India defies geography.... the states are scattered haphazard over the map. Here and there, the British territory is closely interlaced with theirs'.[6]

Though these states were mostly ruled by autocratic princes, their economic structures experienced a transformation. They generally introduced the new land and revenue system which was established in British India. The self-sufficient and self-governing village almost became extinct in the territories of these states also. A few advanced states like Baroda, Mysore, and Travancore, introduced even the administrative system almost on the model of that operating in British India. They also established a uniform system of law and created courts to enforce laws. However, these states represented so many distinct governments and administrations and remained demarcated both from British India and from one another.

Another characteristic of the political and administrative unification of British India was that the state machinery which accomplished this historically progressive act, had been evolved, in various stages, in accordance with constitutions which were the creations of different Acts of the British Parliament. These constitutions which shaped the state structure of British India were not decided by a Constituent Assembly composed of the elected representatives of the Indian people. As a result of this, the British government in India remained legally and technically responsible to the British Parliament through the Secretary of State for India and not to the Indian people whom it governed. This constituted the inevitable undemocratic feature of the state structure established by the British in India.

The defects enumerated above were the inevitable consequences of the fact that the new state was, historically, the offspring of the British conquest of India. It was primarily and basically designed to meet the requirements and subserve the political, economic, and strategic interests of British capitalism. Hence, along with certain historically progressive features, it also inevitably exhibited and suffered from basic and vital limitations and defects.

This contradiction, namely that of a foreign state governing a native population, was one of the main factors which gave rise to the Indian nationalist movement.

> 'The presence of the British in India did not stimulate Indian national consciousness simply by bringing all Indians under an effective common government, and by making accessible Western ideas. The incursion of an alien race, themselves imbued with a strong consciousness of nationality and of colour, had its customary effect in stimulating a similar consciousness among their subjects...
>
> '...the British rule did not merely make the Indians aware that they possessed characteristics in common; it also provided them with common interests and common grievances.'[7]

The Indian people, as they became politically conscious, organized movements to secure demands like administrative reforms, Indianization of the Services, representative institutions, elimination of racial discrimination, franchise, elected legislatures, and executives responsible to these legislatures. civil liberties, a Constitution on lines of self-governing colonies, and finally a Constituent Assembly as the sole authority to shape the constitution for the Indian people.*

In fact, these demands sought to democratize the state machinery and to transfer, in varying degrees, administrative initiative and political power from the British to the Indian people. Thus the national movement became essentially a democratic movement.

It is to be noted that the nationalist movement desired to retain the political and administrative unification of India, accomplished by the British, which represented a historical advance of Indian society. It did not aim at the resuscitation of the self-governing village and the general political and administrative disunity of pre-British feudal India. The Indian nationalists aimed at putting the state structure on a democratic basis. Its most progressive section finally set, as the objective, Independence in terms of a sovereign state existence for the Indian people.

---

* The Indian Nationalist Movement had a multi-class basis and was directed against the British foreign rule. Each social group or class put forth demands which reflected its interests and aspiraions. These groups, generally, however united for such demands as civil liberties, Swaraj and others, which were of common interest.

While the Indian Nationalist Movement had reached a stage when it had put forth the demand of Independence or a sovereign state existence for the Indian people, various political groups representing different classes had their own conception of the nature of the future state structure of India. Barring the Muslim League which stood for the division of India into Hindu and Muslim sovereign states, other political groups and organizations desired to preserve the single state existence of the Indian people accomplished by Britain (though granting the right of self-determination to nationalities). However, while some of them visualized a democratic Indian state based on modern capitalist economy, others like the All-India Trade Union Congress and socialist groups stood for a socialist state based on socialist economy.

References

1 O'Malley, pp. 3-4.
2 Refer Carr.
3 O'Malley, p. 1.
4 ibid., p. 1.
5 Coupland, p. 7.
6 ibid., p. 14.
7 Carr, p. 153.

CHAPTER XI

RISE OF NEW SOCIAL CLASSES IN INDIA

Uneven Emergence of New Social Classes

Introduction

THE EMERGENCE of new social classes in India was the direct consequence of the establishment of a new social economy, a new type of state system and a state administrative machinery, and the spread of new education during the British rule.[1]

Intro

These classes were unknown to past Indian society, since they were primarily the offspring of the new capitalist economic structure which developed in India as a result of the British conquest and the impact on her of the British and world economy. The Indian people were reshuffled into new social groupings, new classes, as a result of the basic capitalist economic transformation of Indian society.

The process of the rise of new social classes in different parts of the country and among various communities was, however, an uneven one. This was due to the fact that the new social economy spread, both in time and tempo, unevenly, since this spread depended on the growth of political power of Britain in India. The conquest of India by Britain resulting in the economic transformation which it led to, was not a single simultaneous event. India was subdued by Britain by instalments and through stages. Different parts of the country became more or less economically transformed on the new capitalist basis in sequence of their political subjugation. Hence, new social classes came into being earlier in those zones which came under British influence earlier. Bengal was among the first prizes which fell to Britain and where the British Government created, for the first time in Indian history, private property in land in the shape of Zemindari.

Therefore, it was in Bengal that two of the new social classes, the zemindars and the tenants, came first into existence. It was also in Bengal and Bombay, that the first industrial enterprises such as jute and cotton factories were started leading thereby to the emergence of such new classes as industrialists and proletariat. Further, it was for the same reason that in these provinces Britain established a complex, well ramified, administrative system and introduced new educational institutions imparting knowledge in modern sciences such as modern medicine, law, etc. thereby leading to the growth of the professional classes first here.[2]

However, as the British conquest of India finally enveloped the entire country, the new social economy, administrative system, and modern education spread all over India and gave rise to new social classes on a national scale.

The process of the rise of new social classes among different communities was also an uneven one. This was due to the fact that certain communities were engaged, in the pre-British period, in definite economic, social, or educational vocations. For instance, in pre-British society, mainly the Banyas were traders and shroffs, and the Brahmins, the custodians of education among the Hindus. In the new social environment, the Banyas were among the first groups (another being the Parsis) to take to modern capitalist commerce and banking and develop into new social classes, namely the commercial and financial bourgeoisie. Similarly, the Brahmins were among the first to study and assimilate the modern education introduced by the British government and project a modern intelligentsia and an educated middle class. The upper strata of the Muslim community in the pre-British period, were, on the whole, divorced from medieval trade or moneylending and were mainly engaged in military and administrative careers. Further, they predominantly resided in Northern India which came under British rule much later. The vast Muslim population of Bengal mainly belonged to the poorer classes. Hence a modern intelligentsia, a modern educated middle class and a bourgeoisie, on a substantial scale, sprang from within the Muslim community later than from within the Hindu community.[3] (See Chapters IX and XIX.)

New Social Classes

We will next enumerate the new social classes which evolved in the Indian society during the British rule. In agrarian areas these were principally (1) zemindars created by the British government; (2) absentee landlords; (3) tenants under zemindars and absentee landlords; (4) the class of peasant proprietors divided into upper, middle and lower strata; (5) agricultural labourers; (6) the modern class of merchants and (7) the modern class of moneylenders.

In the urban areas, these were principally (1) the modern class of capitalists, industrial, commercial and financial; (2) the modern working class engaged in industrial, transport, mining, and such other enterprises; (3) the class of petty traders and shopkeepers bound up with modern capitalist economy; (4) the professional classes such as technicians, doctors, lawyers, professors, journalists, managers, clerks and others, comprising the intelligentsia and the educated middle class.

Forces leading to their Emergence

Primarily, the new classes came into existence as a result of the basic economic transformation brought about by various acts of the British government (such as the new type of land relations), the penetration of Indian society by commercial and other forces from the outside capitalist world, and the establishment of modern industries in India.

The introduction of private property in land in the form of Zemindari and Ryotwari by the British government brought into being the new classes of large estate owners, the zemindars, and peasant proprietors. Further, the creation of the right to lease land brought into being such classes as tenants and sub-tenants; the creation of the right to purchase and sell land together with the right to hire and employ labour on land, created conditions for the growth of the class of absentee landlords and that of the agricultural proletariat.

As Marx wrote in 1853: 'The Zemindari and Ryotwari systems were both of them agrarian revolutions effected by British ukases, and opposed to each other; the one aristocratic, the other democratic; the one a caricature of the English landlordism, the other of French peasant-proprietorship; but pernicious, both combining the most contradictory characters, both made not for the people who cultivate the soil, not for the holder who owns it, but for the government that taxes it'.[4]

As a logical working out of the new agrarian-economic system, a hierarchy of intermediaries developed between the zemindar and the cultivating tenant in the zemindari zones, and a chain of intermediaries, namely moneylenders, absentee landlords, and merchants, grew up between the cultivating peasant and the state in the Ryotwari area. Due to the operation of causes enumerated in the chapter on agriculture, a large class of capitalist landlords similar to that in England and the U.S.A. or a preponderant class of economically stable and flourishing peasant proprietors similar to that in France, did not evolve in India.[5] Part 1 of Ch 1

(Instead, along with the classes of zemindars, tenants, peasant proprietors, and land labourers, there developed in the agrarian area, on an increasing scale, such groups as modern moneylenders, merchants who were intermediaries between the peasants and the market, and absentee landlords interested only in securing rent. These classes and groups were unknown in pre-British Indian society.) [illegible]

(Though the classes of moneylenders and merchants existed in the rural area in pre-British India, their function and position in the old economy were substantially different from those in the new economy.) The moneylender in the old Indian society played almost an insignificant role.) He occasionally lent money to the village agriculturist or artisan, the interest strictly fixed by the village panchayat. Further, the moneylender could not annex the land or livestock in case a farmer did not meet the interest claim since the land belonged to the village community. (Similarly, the village merchant, in old society, only reinforced the village with a few articles which it could not produce. His role was, however, magnified, even became transformed, when the new land system was introduced, when land became private property and agricultural produce became a commodity.) The merchant became indispensable to the peasant as an intermediary for the sale of his crop in the Indian or world market.[6] [illegible]

Since their roles were transformed, the classes of modern merchants and moneylenders in agrarian areas might be described as new classes linked up with the new capitalist economy and performing functions quite different from those which they performed in the social economy of medieval pre-British Indian society. The modern commercial bourgeoisie was also a new evolution.

Part II of [illegible]

Under the British rule, all production in India, rural or urban, agricultural or industrial, became production for the market. As a result of this, the internal market expanded and a large class of traders engaged in internal trade grew. Also during the British period, India became linked up with the world market far more extensively than before. This led to the growth of a large class of merchants whose function was to export and import goods from and into India. Thus came into being the class of commercial bourgeoisie, engaged in extensive internal and external trade, in the country.

It is true that, in pre-British India, both internal and foreign trade existed but their volume and scope as observed earlier were limited. As a result of this, the merchant class in pre-British India, engaged both in internal and foreign trade, was extremely small. Its significance and specific weight in the country economy also was not very great.

The new commercial classes which grew out of the new economic situation were of a different type from their counterparts in pre-British India. The new merchant classes traded in all production, rural and urban, agricultural and industrial, in the country. They purchased agricultural produce from the zemindars, tenants, and peasant proprietors, and sold it in Indian and international markets. They purchased industrial goods from the owners of modern industrial enterprises and likewise sold them in the Indian and world markets. While, in pre-British India, the role of the merchant class was small since the overwhelming proportion of the country's products was outside the scope of the market, the role of the modern and new commercial class of India became an imposing one.[7] The establishment of railways and accumulation of profits and savings in the hands of the Indian trading class, a section of zemindars and wealthy members of the professional classes, which could serve as capital, led to the rise of Indian-owned textile, mining, and other industries and the growth of the new class of industrial bourgeoisie in the country. Along with this class inevitably emerged the new class of modern proletariat in India. Indian society now included in its composition such new groups as mill-owners, mine-owners, and other owners of new capitalist enterprises; also such groups as factory workers, mine workers, railway workers, workers on the plantations. These classes and groups did not and could not exist in pre-British Indian society since there did not exist modern factories, mines, plantations, or railways.

Thus with the growth of modern industries in India, the new classes of the modern bourgeoisie and the working class came into existence.[8]

Ch 1 Part II

Indian industries were established and developed at a rapid rate only in the later decades of the nineteenth century and thereafter. The industrial bourgeoisie and the working class grew in number, in proportion as these industries developed.

The professional classes comprising modern lawyers, doctors, teachers and professors associated with modern educational institutions, managers and clerks working in modern commercial and other enterprises, officials functioning in state administrative machinery, engineers, chemist, technologist, agronomists, journalists and others, formed another new social group which evolved in Indian society during the British period. The new economic, social, and state systems required, as personnel, cadres of educated Indians, versed in modern law, technology, medicine, economics, administrative science, and other subjects. In fact, it was mainly due to the pressing need of the new commercial enterprises and the administrative system which prompted the British government to inaugurate modern education and establish, on an increasing scale, modern educational institutions in India. Schools and colleges imparting legal, commercial and general liberal education, were started to meet the needs of the new state and society. Thus there came into existence, in steadily expanding numbers as this society developed, the modern professional classes in India.[9] Such social groups linked up with modern industry, agriculture, commerce, finance, administration, press, and other sections of the new social life, were unknown to pre-British society since such a social, economic, and class system did not then exist.

In pre-British India, village panchayats and caste committees performed all judicial, administrative, and even economic functions in the legion of villages. The village intelligentsia was almost exclusively composed of the village priest and schoolmaster who were the servants of the village community and looked after the religious-cultural and secular-cultural interests of the people. In the cities lived highly learned pundits and maulanas, great artists and literateurs, astronomers and astrologers, vaidyas and hakims proficient in medical knowledge then existing, and artisans and mechanics embodying knowledge and skill of their respective crafts. These groups, however, flourished under the patronage of princes, nobles, and wealthy merchants, and mainly responded to the needs of their patrons. They were, in general, not public practitioners of their skill the advantage of which could be had by the population at large. Their artistic, scientific, and technical capacities, were, in the main, annexed to their royal and other masters.[10]

Modern professional classes which developed on the basis of the requirements of the new society and the spread of the rich modern western culture and education in India during the British rule, contrasted sharply with these groups of pre-British India. Economically, their knowledge and skill, artistic, scientific, or technical, could be at the disposal of any citizen who could pay for it. Socially they became an integral part of the new capitalist society which evolved in India. Further, these professional classes were trained in modern knowledge, in modern western sciences and arts. They were lawyers who studied and practised the new jurisprudence and laws enacted by the British government; doctors who studied modern medicine; engineers who became acqainted with modern technological science; teachers and professors who studied and taught advanced modern social, political, economic, natural, and other sciences, which developed in the west. They were journalists and writers who edited papers and published books which were sold in the market and the content of which was consumed by thousands of people. They were managers and officials who staffed the enormous and complex economic and administrative state machinery of a politically and economically unified India and tackled complex problems affecting the life of the whole nation. This was, in fact, a new social group evolved in the Indian society, to be distinguished from its meagre counterpart in pre-British India where the specific talent and capacity of a schoolmaster, a physician, or an artist, were low and, further, were also a monopoly of the royal or other patron, or at the disposal of a small village community.

In addition to the new classes enumerated above, there existed in the urban area, in every town and city, a big class of petty traders and shopkeepers which had developed with the growth of modern cities and towns.

Surviving Old Classes, Their Changed Position

Though the social economy of India had been transformed from a medieval to a modern capitalist basis (which represented a historical advance of Indian society) during the British period, this transformation had not been so thorough and intensive as in countries like France, England or the U.S.A. The factors explaining this thwarted development have been mentioned in a previous section dealing with Indian economy.

As a result of the insufficient industrial development, remnants of the old economy such as pre-capitalist handicrafts and village artisan industries survived in the country. Corresponding to these remnants of the old economy, classes of pre-capitalist Indian society—village artisans, urban handicraftsmen—also survived and coexisted with new classes in India.

It is, however, to be noted that these remnants of old classes were not identical, in function and characteristics, with the old classes of the pre-British period. Environed by the general capitalist milieu, they bore a number of new features. For instance, the village artisans—a class which was still numerous—did not work as the servants of the village community as in the past but usually brought their goods to the market. Similarly the urban handicraftsmen, who still existed in good number, did not work specifically for princes, nobles, or wealthy merchants as in the past. They also brought the products of their skill to the general market. However, in technique and often even in organization, they retained the old characteristics.

The class of Indian princes, pretty and big, ruling over about one-third of the Indian territory was another class of the pre-British Indian society, which also survived. Its survival was due to the decision of the British government to perpetuate it for political reasons. These princes maintained royal courts, held feudal functions, maintained the paraphernalia of the old feudal regime. However, they had to be distinguished from the pre-British princes in some salient features. A great majority of them had no sovereign powers; all vital functions and powers of their states were taken over or were controlled by the paramount British power. The economic structures on which these states were based, were also on the whole fundamentally different from those on which the pre-British states rested. In fact, in spite of the survival of some remnants of the old economy and social relations like serfdom, basically the economies of these states became an integral part of the national economy of India.

A modern legal system was introduced in advanced states though absolutism also prevailed in a number of them.

Democratic liberties did not exist or existed in a very curtailed form in these states. This handicap retarded the social, economic, and cultural development of the inhabitants.

Due to these reasons, Indian princes who governed these states could not be considered to be the same as the old class of princes in pre-British India. Though the states were not as yet, economically, socially, politically, or culturally, modernized, still they were also not the replica of those which existed in the pre-British period.[11]

The Indian princes also were not a pure class of medieval nobles who lived on revenue mostly derived from land. A number of these princes invested their money in modern commercial, industrial, and financial enterprises even in territory outside their state frontiers. To that extent, these princes were transformed into modern capitalists bound up with the new capitalist economy.

The Indian princes, modified survivals of the old class of princes of pre-British society, coexisted with the new classes which evolved in Indian society.

The survival of the remnants of old classes, even though existing in a modified form alongside the new classes, made the Indian society a complicated organism with extremely variegated and antagonistic social forces struggling for their respective interests within it. The Indian people became a motley crowd composed of numerous old and new classes. Social groups belonging to various societies, past and present, constituted the new Indian society. Corresponding to this, old outlooks, which were the world conceptions of past epochs, interpenetrated modern outlooks which sprang from the basic modern social soil. This was one of the reasons which explained the slow growth of national consciousness and national unity among the Indian people.

We will now briefly refer to the interests, traits, problems, programmes, organizations, and movements of the important among these new classes.

Zemindars: their Interests and Organizations

Ch 3 -> Part 1

As seen before, the class of zemindars had been largely the creation of the British government.[12] N. N. Ghosh writes: 'The zemindars with whom the Permanent Settlement was made, were an aristocracy manufactured by Lord Cornwallis. They were entirely the creatures of the state.'[13] Due to such genesis, the zemindars, on the whole, always supported the British government and opposed it only when their Zemindari rights were in any way encroached upon. The British government, on its part, counted upon them as a reliable loyal force and treated them with favour. 'Sir Lawrence showed the Talookdars all the attention and consideration in his power.'[14] Lord Lytton frankly stated that the conservative forces of the Indian society including the landed aristocracy should serve as the support of the British rule in India (see Chapter X). In various reforms and constitutional schemes introduced by the British government, the zemindars were given special representation (see Chapter X) and the political weight of this class was thrown on the side of the British government, either in the struggle of the latter in legislatures or outside against the nationalist forces. The landed aristocracy almost always supported the government when the Indian National Congress, under Liberals, Extremists or Gandhi, put forth demands for democratic rights, administrative reforms or Swaraj, and organized struggles, parliamentary or extra-parliamentary, to back up these demands (see Chapter XVIII). This was due to the fact that the landed aristocracy apprehended that any democratic transformation, social, political, or economic, would jeopardize its class interests and even class existence.

The zemindars were, on the whole, conservative and unenterprising. They formed their principal organization, the

British Indian Association, in 1851. E. S. Montagu described this organization in his *Indian Diary*, published in 1930, thus: 'The British Indian Association (is) more or less a conservative body headed by the Maharaja of Burdwan, the best type of conservative Indian. . . . He has a fierce love of the British connection—not a passive acquiescence, but a firm belief in it. . . . He is a large and very rich zemindar, and wishes to be made an independent chief.'[15]

The Indian princes were the first to be associated with the state apparatus established by Britain in India. In 1862, the Maharaja of Patiala and the Raja of Benares were nominated to the Governor-General's Legislative Council. The next group of nomination consisted of zemindars. About this, K. B. Krishna writes: 'A group of nomination can be drawn as it were beginning with the rajas, zemindars, retired officials, merchants and professional classes.'[16]

(The zemindars took, on the whole, an anti-democratic stand, on vital questions affecting the life of the Indian people. B. C. Pal writes: 'To protest against the Press Act of Lytton, the Indian Association convened a public meeting of the inhabitants of Calcutta at the town hall. The British Indian Association, representing the Bengal zemindars, refused to join the meeting. But, the educated middle class, not only of Calcutta and Bengal but practically of the other provinces also, fully supported this protest of the Indian Association.'[17]

Since the zemindars appropriated a good proportion of income from land, the economic condition of the mass of tenants in the Zemindari zones steadily deteriorated. While the latter were increasingly impoverished, agriculture also, for lack of proper manure, seeds, etc., increasingly decayed. The nationalists as well as British statesmen recognized the precarious position of agrarian economy in the Zemindari area and the alarming poverty of the tenant population)

The critics of landed aristocracy, Indian and foreign, remarked that the zemindars did not play any productive role in the Indian economy. They stood for the rationalization if not the elimination of the Zemindari. They considered this as one of the indispensable prerequisites for the renovation and development of Indian agriculture on which the economic position of a great majority of the Indian population depended.[18]

(Socially, the class of zemindars, on the whole, opposed far-reaching social reform. The Maharaja of Darbhanga declared in favour of the perpetuation of the anti-democratic caste system on the ground that the caste system was the best and surest safeguard against forces which menaced civilization (see Chapter XIV. 'The Crusade against the Caste System'). While a few enlightened zemindars supported and assisted the movement for democratic social progress, as a class they took an attitude of reactionary opposition to it. Classes connected with landed property or nations who live on agriculture have been generally conservative in contrast to commercial and industrial communities. In his *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, Tawney remarks: 'The psychology of a nation which lives predominantly by the land is in sharp contrast with that of a commercial society. In the latter, when all goes well, continuous expansion is taken for granted as the rule of life, new horizons are constantly opening, and the catchword of politics is the encouragement of enterprise. In the former, the number of niches into which each successive generation must be fitted is strictly limited; movement means disturbance . . . and the object of statesmen is, not to foster individual initiative, but to prevent social dislocation.'[19]

The Indian zemindars exhibited this attitude of antagonism to reform and progress with a special emphasis.

As the nationalist movement developed with a programme of democratic reorganization of the Indian society and as subsequently the movement of peasants, tenants, and land labourers grew, the zemindars more than ever, looked to the British government for the protection of their interests and rights. Through their own organizations, they asked for appropriate representation in the legislatures.

Tenants: Their Interests and Organizations

The creation of Zemindari simultaneously engendered the class of tenants in India. The tenants were rackrented, impoverished, and suffered from oppression at the hands of the zemindars.

In course of time, a series of intermediaries developed between the zemindar and the cultivating tenant whose condition thereby increasingly deteriorated. The Bengal Tenancy Acts of 1859 and 1885 aimed at ameliorating the position of the tenant. However, the legislation did not accomplish much. The mass of tenants continued to live in an increasingly worsening condition.

In addition to the class of tenants in the Zemindari tracts, a new class of tenants also grew in the Ryotwari areas. Due to the progressive impoverishment among the peasant proprietors, land steadily passed from the hands of the latter to those of absentee landlords.

Gradually an awakening started taking place among the tenants in various provinces.[20] In the U.P., Bihar, Bengal, and other areas, they formed their tenants' unions or joined kisan sabhas which sprang up and which were composed of peasants, tenants, and land labourers—of all those who worked on the land. These tenants' unions and kisan sabhas formulated the specific grievances and demands of the tenants and even organized movements to back up these demands. Since the organizers of these unions, sabhas, and movements were staunch nationalists like Jawaharlal Nehru, Professor N. G. Ranga and Swami Sahajanand, the tenants along with other categories of those who worked on the land, came under the influence of nationalist propaganda and increasingly joined the nationalist movement under their own flag and with their own class demands. The nationalist spirit began to percolate steadily to the economically and culturally backward tenants. The kisan sabhas and tenants' unions began to be critical not only of the British government but also of the Indian National Congress which, according to them, was on the whole, solicitous of looking after the interests of the zemindars. They formulated their programme of demands such as reduction of rent, abolition of the practice of illegal dues extorted by the zemindars, rackrenting etc. Kisan sabhas even described the Zemindari system itself as wasteful, inefficient, iniquitous, and against national interests.

Peasant Proprietors: Their Subdivisions, Interests, and Organizations

The creation of property in land in the form of Ryotwari engendered the class of peasant proprietors in India, which was broadly divided into three main categories according to the economic strength, viz., the upper, middle, and lower strata of peasant proprietors. As a result of the operation of factors like heavy land tax, small holdings, fragmentation of plots, growing heavy indebtedness, and others enumerated before, this class had been increasingly impoverished since it came into existence. It had been in a state of permanent disintegration. A process of differentiation was constantly at work within it, a meagre minority of the mass of peasant proprietors ascending to the level of rich peasants while a large number falling into the ranks of the poor peasants, tenants of the absentee landlords, or land labourers. This process of differentiation grew at an accelerated rate since the rate of impoverishment of the peasantry increased. This led to the increasing passing of land from the hands of the peasant proprietors into those of moneylenders, merchants, or others, who formed the new class of absentee landlords. The middle stratum of the peasantry was steadily dissolving and its number diminishing as growing impoverishment constantly drove a section of its members into the ranks of lower peasantry or even paupers or agricultural proletariat. As seen in the chapter on agriculture, both the classes of absentee landlords and agricultural proletariat grew at a high and geometrical rate in India in subsequent years.

The peasant proprietors developed national consciousness earlier than the tenants. This was due to the fact that the peasant proprietors were directly linked up with and had directly to deal with the state to which it paid the land tax while the tenants came into conflict with the zemindars over the question of rent and not with the state.

There was another reason which explained why the peasant proprietors acquired national consciousness earlier than the tenants. The Indian National Congress led by Gandhi was dominated by the Gandhian ideology of class harmony and formed its programme, on the whole, in the spirit of that ideology.[21] According to that view, the zemindars and tenants were Indians and any programme which would take up and fight for the demands of the tenants would thereby only betray partisanship of that class and antagonize the zemindars, resulting in damage to the national united front of all classes in the struggle for Swaraj. However, the growth of the Kisan movement exerted some pressure on the Indian National Congress which, under that pressure, formulated a programme of demands for the tenants. Swami Sahajanand, Professor N. G.

Ranga, Indulal Yagnik, and other leaders of the Kisan movement, however, criticized the Congress leadership for not enthusiastically working for that programme and even asserted that in Bihar and a number of other provinces, the right wing leaders holding the Gandhian viewpoint allied with the zemindars against the tenants. They further pointed out how the Congress government even used coercive state power against the legitimate struggles of the tenants.[22]

Indian Kisans, Their Principal Movements

We will next briefly refer to the principal movements and organizations of the Indian kisans—peasant proprietors, tenants, and land labourers—during the British period.

It was after 1918 that the kisans began to develop political consciousness, take part in organized national struggles and subsequently even build up their own organizations under their own flag and programme, and organized struggles for the fulfilment of that programme under their own leadership.

There had, however, taken place before 1918, a number of peasant movements which were spontaneous, spasmodic, and having limited and local economic aims.

The period between 1870 and 1897 was interspersed with severe famines in India, among which those of 1870, 1896, and 1897, were most devastating. This led to great misery among the kisans in affected areas. Periodically occurring economic depressions also led to great hardships among them. As a result of this, occasional kisan struggles broke out against the zemindars, moneylenders, and the government.

In 1870, the Bengal tenants were hit hard by the economic depression accentuating their general poverty. Thousands of them 'came to consciously refuse rents, disobey the dictates of courts, obstruct their eviction and finally to fight with whatever weapons were available. . . . A regular state of anarchy came to prevail in a large part of Bengal and Santal countryside. . . .' The rising was quelled by the government which, however, appointed an Inquiry Committee and subsequently enacted the Bengal Tenancy Act in 1885.

The slump in cotton prices after the end of the Civil War in America hit the Indian kisans hard. Their debt burden as a result became very heavy and, in the Deccan in 1875, the

Maratha peasants rose against the moneylenders who, with the aid of Courts, threatened them with eviction. They raided the houses of moneylenders, destroyed documents of debts and even killed some of them. The riot was quelled. The government, however, recognized the necessity of relief to the peasants and passed the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act in 1879.

A revolt of the peasants threatened with loss of their land to the moneylenders took place in the Punjab in the last decade of the nineteenth century. To ease the situation, the government enacted the Punjab Alienation Act in 1902-3.

During the time of Lord Curzon, a Resolution of the Government of India on Land Revenue Policy was adopted aiming at protecting the tenants from the heavy pressure of the demands of the zemindars.

The Indian National Congress 'did not lay as much stress on the need for relief for our peasants during 1905-19 as it did on the needs of Indian industrialists', such as protection, etc.[23] Especially, the Indian nationalists, on the whole, avoided reference to the mass of tenants living under the Zemindari. 'Lord Curzon's challenge to Romesh Chandra Dutt, an ex-president of the Congress, that it was the government which had done more to protect tenants from the rapacity of the zemindars remained unanswered.'[24]

In 1917-18 the struggle of the peasants of Champaran in Bihar, led by Gandhi, against the indigo planters, most of whom were Europeans, took place, where Gandhi employed his method of Satyagraha. The government appointed an Inquiry Committee with Gandhi as a member and, on the basis of the report published by it, it enacted a law which brought partial relief to the kisans. N. G. Ranga, who was critical of Gandhi's leadership of the struggle, remarked: 'Just as the earlier Congress agitation led by Romesh Chandra Dutt against temporary settlements did not embrace the exploitation of our peasants by zemindars, so also this agitation led by the Mahatma in Champaran did not lead up to any fight against the main causes for the terrible poverty and sufferings of Champaran peasants, namely the excessive rents and exorbitant incidence of debts. . . . It does strike us rather significant that both he (Gandhi) and Rajen Prasad should have remained scrupulously silent upon the ravages of the zemindari system. . . .'[25]

Thereafter, Gandhi organized the Satyagraha movement of peasants in Kaira against the collection of land revenue which they could not pay due to failure of crops.

These were some of the main kisan struggles before the Non-Co-operation Movement of 1919. The struggles lacked a political content and were often anarchic.

Sections of Indian kisans were roused to political consciousness during the Non-Co-operation Movement. The Indian National Congress gave a slogan of non-payment of land revenue which had a great effect. The peasants interpreted the political struggle for Swaraj in terms of a struggle against the heavy land tax and sections of them sympathized with, supported, and participated in the movement. It was the first participation of a section of Indian peasants in an organized political movement.

During the period of the Non-Co-operation Movement, peasant struggles which were not organized by the Congress also broke out, such as the struggles in the Guntur District, Karnatak, and Oudh Rent Act of 1921 which partially met the demands of the peasants was enacted by the government.

The Moplah Rebellion of 1922 had both communal and economic roots. The economic discontent of the Moplahs, who were mainly Muslim agriculturists intensely exploited by the Nambudris who were Brahmin landlords in Malabar, was canalized by the Muslim communalists into communal channels with the result that a revolt, predominantly economic in content but religious in form, broke out leading to tragic loss of life and property.

It frequently happened in India that, where the Hindus were landlords and the Muslims were peasants, often due to instigation of communalists, economic class conflict between them assumed communal forms.

Two more peasant struggles, one that of the Koyas in the Narsipatan Taluka, led by Sitaram Raju, and the other that of the peasantry of Sitapur, Rai Barelli and other districts in the U.P., may also be mentioned. These struggles were, however, spontaneous in character, bearing striking resemblance to those of the nineteenth century.

It was after the end of the Non-Co-operation Movement that the process of the formation of independent class organizations of the Indian kisans started. Ryots' associations and agricultural and labour unions were formed in Andhra in 1923. Kisan sabhas were started in some parts of the Punjab, Bengal, and the U.P. in 1926-7. In 1928, representatives of the Bihar and U.P. Kisan sabhas presented a memorandum to the All-Parties Conference presided over by Motilal Nehru, which embodied such demands as universal franchise, fundamental democratic rights and national independence.

The Andhra Provincial Ryot's Association was started in 1928.

Two struggles of the peasantry of the Bardoli District in Gujarat broke out, one in 1928-9 and the other in 1930-1. The first was led by Vallabhbhai Patel and its success in persuading the government to concede most of the demands gave a strong impetus to the peasant movement.

In 1930, Gandhi the absolute leader of the Congress, submitted his Eleven Points to the British government as a compromise. He was criticized by the left nationalists and socialists for not including in the Eleven Points the vital demands of the Indian working class and peasantry though they included the most crying grievances of the Indian capitalists.[26] N. G. Ranga remarked: 'Mahatmajee should certainly have asked for a considerable reduction of rents charged by zemindars, redemption of our agricultural indebtedness . . . a minimum wage for our labour, nationalization of our key industries. . . . But he would not do it consistently with his class collaboration convictions and his anxiety not to divide our people into two political groups basing their difference on economic interests.'[27]

The world agrarian and general economic crisis which occurred in 1929 hit the Indian peasantry hard. They were in a state of ferment. Sections of them participated in demonstrations and meetings organized by the Congress. There were peasant movements in the U.P., Andhra, Gujarat, Karnatak, and other parts of the country, both authorized by the Congress and unauthorized.[28]

The process of independent organization of the kisans as a class gathered momentum after the end of the Civil Disobedience Movement. An impression grew among the radical nationalists and advanced elements in the kisan movement that the Congress leadership was solicitous of the interests of the capitalists and landed magnates.

They felt that, to safeguard the interests of the kisans, their independent class organizations and leadership must be evolved. They also thought that the national struggle for Swaraj could be successful only if the kisans were drawn into its orbit, by taking up their own class demands. The Congress Socialists Party, Communist groups, and Left Nationalists like Jawaharlal Nehru, stressed the necessity of forming kisan organizations in the country.

The kisan movements began to gather strength in the 'thirties of the present century. The first Indian Kisan School to train active kisan workers in the method of carrying on propaganda and organizational work was started at Nidubrole in 1938. The Madras Presidency Ryot's Association was formed in 1935. The Madras Presidency Agriculturists' Association was organised in 1937.

There were also attempts to organize the kisans on a communal basis. Sir Abdur Rahim and Faz-lul-Huq started in Bengal the Praja Party to muster the Muslim kisans. The party subsequently changed its name into Krishik Proja Party. It adopted a programme of agrarian reform and even abolition of the Zemindari system. The party gained considerable strength among the Muslim peasantry of Bengal.

The Bihar Kisan Sabha which was started in 1927 developed into an extensive organization after 1934. This was due to the effort of Swami Sahajanand Sarswati. Bihar Kisan Sabha had been perhaps the strongest section of the All-India Kisan Sabha which was subsequently formed.

The Provincial Kisan Sabha was formed in the U.P. in 1935 with a programme which included the demands for the abolition of the Zemindari system.

Kisan sabhas also began to spring up in other parts of the country.

The government passed a number of relief measures to alleviate the conditions of the kisans. In the U.P., five Debt Relief Acts were passed in 1934; in the Punjab, the Regulation of Accounts Act was passed in 1934; in Bengal, the Moneylenders Act was passed in 1933 and the Relief of Indebtedness Act in 1935. Since even this legislation did not appreciably improve the position of the kisans, their discontent continued to grow and find expression in the growth of the kisan movement.

The first All-India Kisan Congress which met at Lucknow in 1935 decided that the Congress should be established as the supreme kisan organization in the country. Jawaharlal Nehru expressed strong sympathies and support for this Congress.

The establishment of the All-India Kisan Congress, though not enveloping the entire kisan population of India, was an event of great historical significance. For the first time in the history of the Indian people, an all India organization of the Indian peasantry came into existence with a programme of common demands and expressing the aspirations of the entire kisan humanity of this vast land. It revealed the birth of a new higher consciousness and a wider perspective which transcended the mere local perspective existing in the pre-British India among the rural population.

The All-India Kisan Sabha carried on wide educative and propaganda work among the Indian kisans. It also extended its organization in the country. The All-India Kisan Sabha asked for collective affiliation to the Indian National Congress. The Congress, however, did not agree to the suggestion.

On the eve of the elections for provincial legislatures held under the New Constitution in 1937, the Indian National Congress published an Election Manifesto which embodied democratic demands for civil liberties and a social economic programme of radical improvement of the conditions of the kisans. The votes of the agrarian population, who were enthused by the manifesto, in favour of Congress candidates, played an important role in their successes at the polls.

The Congress governments which were subsequently established in a number of provinces, however, failed to meet the obligations made to the kisans. They passed some agrarian legislation in some provinces, (for details refer to Chapter X) which hardly affected the lower strata of the kisans. The dissatisfaction of the kisans with the Congress governments found expression in a number of protest meetings, conferences, and demonstrations. Further, they criticized the Congress governments for arresting a number of kisan leaders, banning kisan meetings, and even using police force against the kisans, especially in Bihar.

During the period of Congress governments, the kisan sabhas organized a number of meetings, conferences and kisan marches, to bring pressure on them to implement their demands. The Right Wing leaders of the Congress and the Congress Ministries disapproved of such extra-parliamentary forms of struggle when Congress governments were functioning.

During the period of the growth of the kisan movement since 1934, volunteer's organizations among kisans also sprang up in a number of places.

Kisans: Their Specific Psychological and Other Traits

After narrating the history of the growth, conditions, movements, and organizations of large sections of peasant proprietors, tenants, and land labourers, we will next describe the specific psychological and other traits of these social classes.[29]

The class of peasant proprietors owning their land, working on it and trading in its products, exhibit certain psychological characteristics. Since they own land, however modest in dimension it be, a peasant proprietor is usually conservative and does not exhibit that audacity in action which a factory worker who is usually propertyless shows. This is the general experience in different countries. Further, the very method of individual production in which he is engaged on land, makes the peasant individualistic, and makes it difficult for him to collaborate in a common endeavour. Here, the peasant contrasts sharply with the factory worker engaged in the production process in modern factories which is based on an extensive division of labour. This is one of the reasons why a workers' trade union and other organizations sprang up earlier than those of the kisans in India. It is also the reason why there have been more frequent and numerous collective and organized actions of an economic and political nature among the working class than among the peasants, even though the economic condition of the peasant has often been worse than that of the labourer.

The peasantry is scattered over a vast area unlike the workers. This has also made the work of organization of the kisans more difficult.[30] Further, the kisans live in the countryside which is culturally backward and where life goes on at a slow, almost monotonous, pace in sharp contrast to cities which are the focal points of a country's culture, which are strongholds of the dynamic processes of contemporary life and where advanced social, political, educational, and other movements mostly originate and grow. Isolated from town culture and dynamic processes of modern life, the kisan, mentally natured in the culturally poor countryside, is relatively inert, mentally dull and ignorant. Educational and cultural workers and nationalist propagandists have found it more difficult to rouse the kisans to a comprehension of social, political, and other problems than the lower strata of urban population.

There is another reason why the kisan is more superstitious and innert than other backward groups composing the nation. Unlike industry, agriculture mainly depends for its fruition on natural forces such as good rains, etc. which have not been mastered by science or technology. Good land, proper seeds and effective plough, healthy livestock, and his own labour, are not the only prerequisites for the realization of crops which finally depend on the unmastered forces of Nature like rain. This fact contributes to make the peasant more superstitious and, to some extent, even diffident and defeatist. This is why the grossest superstitions thrive among the rural population. Rather than struggle for life by organized collective audacious action, the kisans often submit to catastrophies in a helpless manner or exhibit the blind valour of a desperate man when they take to the road of spontaneous, unorganized, and futile revolts.*

Significant historical development and events which happened in India, such as the growth of the nationalist movement and educational and propaganda work of social, political and other workers, together with their own increasing impoverishment, however began to weaken the social and mental inertia of the proverbially immobile Indian agriculturists. As described before, they began to move, though very slowly, to build up their own organizations, formulate their own demands, and increasingly to participate in the national and their own class movements. This was also due to the fact that Indian nationalists, feeling that, without the support of the kisans who formed a vast section of the population they could not win freedom, began to pay greater attention to them. Congressmen, socialists, communists, and other groups, approached the kisans and organized work among them.

---

* Due to these organic weaknesses, economic, social, and psychological, such as dispersion on a vast area, heterogeneous social composition, conservatism and others, the peasantry does not play an independent political role in the history of social struggles. In modern times, it has followed either the bourgeoisie or the working class. In the French Revolution of 1789, the serfs who were toilers on the land accepted the leadership of the rising bourgeoisie who guaranteed them freedom and land, in the struggle against the feudal nobility. In the Russian Revolution of 1917, the peasantry supported the Bolshevik Party, the party of the Russian working class, which alone promised them land. The Social Revolutionaries, who represented the heterogeneous peasant mass, split and their Left section went over to the Bolsheviks.

Due to the process of differentiation going on at an increasing rate among the agricultural population, the class of land labourers had been rapidly growing. Though this class owned absolutely no property and lived in poverty, due to its cultural backwardness it had still not developed much consciousness. However, the kisan movement and general nationalist movements had been steadily drawing it also in their orbits.

Part III
4 Ch 1

Rise of Modern Indian Intelligentsia

We will next see the role of the intelligentsia in the social, political, and cultural development of the Indian people.

Part III
4 Ch 1

In India, a modern intelligentsia developed decades before modern industries were established and the industrial bourgeoisie came into existence.[31] Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his group constituted the first group of intelligentsia who studied western culture and imbibed its rationalist and democratic doctrines, conceptions, and spirit.

The number of educated Indians was small in the first decades of the nineteenth century. It was only after the British government established more and more schools and colleges, private effort of the missionary groups and enlightened Indians reinforcing this growth, that a big class of educated Indians developed during the second half of the nineteenth century, projecting from it a large section of intelligentsia.

The role of the intelligentsia in the history of modern Indian nationalism was decisive. They integrated, to a great extent the Indian people into a modern nation and organized various progressive socio-reform and religio-reform movements in the country. They were the pioneers, organizers, and leaders of all political national movements. They brought ideas of nationalism and freedom to wider and wider sections of the Indian people, through educational and propaganda work which involved great self-sacrifice and suffering. They created rich provincial literatures and cultures, trying to impregnate them with the spirit of nationalism and democracy. They produced great scientists, poets, historians, sociologists, literateurs, philosophers and economists. In fact the progressive intelligentsia, which assimilated modern western democratic culture and comprehended the complex problems of the incipient Indian nation, were the makers of modern India.

Between 1851 and 1884, the professional classes had formed three organizations in the country, namely the Madras Native Association, the Bombay Association, and the Indian Association. (See Chapter X). These organizations pressed the government to Indianize the services on the ground that the state machinery of a country must be staffed by its own nationals and not by foreigners. The demand also corresponded to their own sectional interests.

With the establishment of Universities in the country after 1857, the numerical strength of the educated Indians rapidly increased. The educated Indians were the first to acquire national consciousness in India. Outstanding members of the Indian intelligentsia backed up by a commercial and incipient industrial bourgeoisie founded in 1885 the first national political organization of the Indian people, the Indian National Congress. The language adopted by the Congress was English. The intelligentsia thus became its first leaders. (See Chapter X).

→ Ch 3 → political movements

The subsequent history of the nationalist movement in India which developed, mainly under the leadership of the Indian National Congress, a broad middle class basis in the first decade of the twentieth century and a still broader mass basis after 1918, has been narrated in the chapter on politics. The important thing to note, however, is that in all its phases of development, the nationalist movement was led by the intellingentsia whichever section of it led it and however different its ideology, methodology, and programme, from those of other sections. During the Liberal phase, the nationalist movement was led by such outstanding Liberal intellectuals

Political → [illegible]

as Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Dadabhai Naoroji, S. Bannerji, M. G. Ranade, Pherozshah Mehta, and others, who were the product of modern education inaugurated in India by the British government. In its next militant phase, the movement was guided by such great and sacrificing leaders as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, B. C. Pal, Aurobindo Ghose and Lala Lajpat Rai who themselves belonged to the modern English-knowing intelligentsia. Even the terrorist movement which, as a minority current, grew in the country, was initiated and led by educated middle class youths who had studied the Irish terrorist and Russian nihilist movements. After 1918, when the nationalist movement, due to a number of historical reasons (see Chapter X), acquired more or less a mass basis, its leadership was provided by members of the intelligentsia such as Gandhi, C. R. Das, Motilal Nehru, Vithalbhai Patel, C. Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Prasad, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Bose and socialist and communist intellectuals.

all [illegible] 3]

The various social reform and religious reform movements among the Hindus, the Muslims, and other communities, were organized by the members of the intelligentsia of those communities. For instance, B. R. Ambedkar, a member of the intelligentsia, led a movement of social reform and political education among the depressed classes. In fact, almost all progressive social, political, and cultural movements which took place during the British rule were the work of the intelligentsia who had imbibed the new western education and culture.

The intelligentsia has been the organizer and leader of all progressive movements in all countries in the modern world. In countries like China, India and others, where the general mass of population has been illiterate and ignorant, the intelligentsia, has been playing a particularly important role, since the illiterate and ignorant masses of these countries could not take even a minimum initiative in self-organization and self-enlightenment. It was the educated Indian who, having studied the history of trade union and peasant movements in other countries, gave a lead to the Indian workers and peasants and helped them to form their class organizations and movements. If the Indian masses had been literate, they could have known by study, the trade union and other movements in other countries, and would have, on their own initiative, formed such organizations. Similarly, the educated

Indians who had assimilated modern ideas of democracy and freedom and who knew about the social, cultural, and scientific achievements of other peoples, spread this knowledge among the illiterate Indian masses.

The educated middle class was the product of the new system of education inaugurated by the British government in India. It was composed of lawyers, doctors, technicians, professors, journalists, state servants, clerks, students, and others. The educated middle class steadily grew in number in the second half of the nineteenth century and after, as a result of the increased establishment of modern educational institutions in the country.

The Council Act of 1861 'was a concession to the educated aristocracy. . . .' 'The Council Act of 1892 was another index to the growth of the professional classes and to the concessions given to these classes.'[32]

The growth of modern education in India was not paralleled by a proportional economic development of the country. Industrial development which guarantees a general economic development of society, thereby increasing its wealth and general prosperity and creating an ever increasing number of jobs and other avenues of income, was slow in India due to a number of factors of which the economic policy of the British government was an important one. As a result of this disparity, by the end of the nineteenth century unemployment among the educated class had already assumed serious proportions. Political discontent born of the economic suffering due to unemployment among the educated middle class was an important factor in the growth of the political current of militant nationalism of which Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal, and Aurobindo Ghose were the principal leaders. It also led to the growth of the terrorist movement.

As the educated middle class grew in the country in the subsequent decades and became more conscious of its own sectional interests, its various groups began to form their own organizations and formulate their own demands. Thus, there came into existence, in increasing numbers, organizations of these groups over and above their general organizations such as Youth Leagues, Volunteer organizations, and others. This process became particularly swift after 1930. A number of unions and associations of such groups as teachers, lawyers. engineers, and others, emerged to defend and organize struggles for getting redress of their grievances. These organizations were similar to trade unions or kisan sabhas which protected the sectional and immediate interests of workers and peasants. The rapid growth of students' organizations and unions. particularly after 1934, all over India, culminating in the formation of all-India students organizations, was also notable.

Modern Indian Bourgeoisie: Its Interests, Organizations and Movements

Along with the commercial market

We will next consider the rise of another new social class which emerged in the Indian society. (As a result of the enormous expansion of internal and foreign trade, the establishment, in course of time, and subsequent growth of modern industries and banks in India, during the period of the British rule, a new class developed, the class of modern commercial. industrial and financial bourgeoisie.) (This class was, as in other countries, economically and socially perhaps the strongest class in India.)

(The rise and development of the Indian bourgeoisie was bound up with the expansion of trade, commerce, industry and banking in India.) The history of the expansion of the latter has been narrated in the chapter on the rise of modern industries. We will refer to the principal interests, traits, problems, organizations, and struggles of this class.

It should also be noted that the Europeans were also engaged in trade, industry, and banking in India. Pursuing their interests, they formed their own organizations separately or together with the Indians according to the nature of the economic enterprise.

(The first European Chamber of Commerce was established at Calcutta in 1834 and at Bombay and Madras in 1836.

The first Indian Chamber of Commerce, The Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, was started in 1887. The Indian Merchants' Chamber was founded in Bombay in 1907. The Marwari Chamber of Commerce was started at Calcutta in 1900 and the South Indian Chamber of Commerce at Madras in 1909. The Indian Chamber of Commerce was created in 1925 'to promote and protect the trade, commerce, and industries in or with which Indians are engaged or concerned.'[38]

Provincial organizations of the Indian commercial community also sprang up subsequently. The Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce was started in 1927.

The conflict of interests between the Indian and the European commercial classes was the main reason for the formation of the independent organizations of these respective groups. However, it must be noted that 'where both are traders, their interests are not identical. Where both are employers, their interests are identical, as shown in the Millowners' Association of Bombay.'[34]

The main grievances of the Indian merchants was what they described as preferential treatment shown to European business by the British government in the sphere of trade and undue restrictions put on Indian trade with non-British countries.

The Indian commercial community criticized and struggled against the privileged position of British commercial interests in India. They, for instance, attacked the favourable position occupied by the British businessmen in the coastal shipping of the country. This led to the introduction of the Reservation of the Coastal Traffic of India in the Legislative Assembly by Mr. Haji. He argued that the coastal trade was controlled by a foreign monopoly which hindered the development of Indian shipping.

Sir P. C. Ray, a nationalist scientist, remarked: 'What the British in the country are enjoying and what they want in a new constitution, is not equality of rights, but special prerogatives as a ruling race, continuance of the preferential treatment they have received from a Government with which they have a kinship, and the perpetuation of the existing inequalities; unless all these prerogatives, privileges and unfair conditions are ceded, Indians will have no chance to build up their economic future.'[35]

The commercial community did not, however, present such militant opposition to the British government as the class of industrialists which, in course of time, developed in the country with the establishment of modern industries. This was due to the fact that the British government strove to safeguard the interests of British industries in the inevitable struggle for markets between these interests and those of rising Indian industries.

'The market is the first school in which the bourgeoisie learns its nationalism.'[36] Almost since its inception, the industrial bourgeoisie put up a strong agitation against the government for securing such demands as protection for the incipient Indian industries.

From 1880 onward, modern industries steadily developed in India and the industrial bourgeoisie grew in strength. The nationalist intelligentsia had already pioneered the nationalist movement in India and had set up the premier national political organization, the Indian National Congress, in 1885. The rising industrialist class had become sufficiently strong and conscious by 1905. From that time, it began to support the professional classes, who were already fighting for breaking the monopoly of the British in the services and professions.

> The professional classes aimed at replacing a group of Britishers who still enjoyed a practical monopoly of medical, legal and journalisitic functions in India. The industrialist classes likewise aimed to replace the British monopoly of industries in India. The development of the largest Indian industry, cotton textiles, was against the British traders. The development of capitalism in India was of a colonial character. The social economy of the country, together with the rigid free trade of the British ruling class, hindered the interests of the rising industrialists. They had to fight against commercial discrimination. They had to fight against free trade.
>
> Their watchword was Swadeshism, protectionism. These rising industrialist classes naturally allied themselves with the professional classes.'[37]

The critics of the economic policy of the British government remarked that, yielding to the pressure of the interests of the British industries, it hindered the free development of Indian industries.[38]

This led to India becoming mainly an agrarian country producing raw materials for British industries. The Indian economic development was adapted and subordinated to the requirements of British industries, thereby reducing the Indian economy to a colonial adjunct of the British economy. Joan Beauchamp commented thus: 'Her (India's) industrial development is subjected to the following restrictions: (a) it must be under the control of British capital, Indian capital being placated with a junior partnership; (b) Indian industries must never be allowed to compete on equal terms with home industries, or to work up raw materials which are required for British industries; (c) the Indian market for British manufactuhrers must not be interfered with, and (d) industries for the production of the means of production must not be developed.'[39]

The industrial bourgeoisie entered the orbit of the Indian nationalist movement with their own slogans of protection, favourable exchange ratio, subsidies for the growing industries, and others.

The industrial capitalists began to enter the orbit of the nationalist movement during the first decade of the twentieth century. This class began to gravitate to the Indian National Congress during this period and enthusiastically supported the programme of Swadeshi and boycott of English goods, since it also served its own class interest.

The Swadeshi Movement which was successful, for some time, gave an impetus to the growth of Indian industries, especially the textile industry.

The nationalist movement which was hitherto mainly restricted to the intelligentsia, sections of the commercial bourgeoisie and educated middle class, secured a broader social basis from 1905 as a result of the entry of large sections of the middle class and politically conscious industrialists.

During the period of the First World War (1914-18), industrial development took place at a rapid rate in the country. This was due to the fact that the British and other foreign industries were mainly diverted for the war and could not supply goods to the Indian market. This gave an impetus to Indian industries and accelerated their expansion. Further, the British government itself, for strategic reasons, supported the establishment of steel and such other industries.

This further added to the social and economic strength of the industrialists.

It was, however, after the end of the war that the specific weight of this class within and influence over the nationalist movement and its principal organization, the Indian National Congress, progressively increased. It was particularly after 1919-20 that it increasingly dominated the Congress organization, shaped its programmes and determined the forms and methods of struggles started by it. The tendency was towards increasing control of this class over the Indian National Congress.

The Indian National Congress came under the influence of Gandhian ideology and Gandhi's political leadership in 1919-20. Gandhi had declared his irreconcilable opposition to modern machinery and industries based on it. The fear of Indian industrialists was, however, dispelled when Gandhi supported the resolution on Swadeshi at the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress in 1920. The resolution stated: 'The session of the National Congress advises that Swadeshi be adopted on a wide scale in respect to cotton goods. . . .' (See the chapter on politics).

The industrialists, with their historical sense and knowledge of laws of economy, did not regard Gandhi's parallel propaganda of khaddar as a danger to their industrial programme. In fact, while operating and multiplying modern machine-based industries in India and deriving profits out of them, some of them, anomalous though it be, donned hand-spun khaddar and even subsidized the khaddar movement. They saw in the Congress and the movements started by it weapons to force the British government to grant political and economic concessions which would be of benefit to their class.

Further, Gandhi's social philosophy based on such theories as those of class harmony, capitalists' trusteeship of their property and 'Capitalists are fathers and workers are children', also appealed to the industrialists.

They saw in this philosophy a defence against the working-class movement developing on a class struggle basis.

Gandhi's consistent opposition to the doctrine of class struggle made him popular among the industrialists. While the latter viewed with disfavour the All-India Trade Union Congress which, like the British Trade Union Congress, was based on the principle of class struggle, they endorsed and even supported the Majur Mahajan which was the trade union organization of the Ahmedabad textile workers sponsored by Gandhi and founded on the principle of class collaboration.

Wealthy industrialists like Birla, Bajaj, Ambalal Sarabhai, Kasturbhai Lalbhai, and others, supported the Congress under Gandhi's absolute leadership and financed its programmes. They also subsidized such schemes as the revival of pre-capitalist handicrafts. In fact, it was mainly due to the financial aid of these industrial magnates who subsidized the All-India Spinners' Association and such other organizations, that the relics of steadily declining old modes of production in India were artificially buttressed and kept alive.

Further, the propaganda of Gandhism with its philosophy which idealized poverty and preached love to the opponent, was also subsidized by these industrialists, perhaps because it was the best antidote to the discontent of labourers with their low wages and bad conditions of work. If poverty is idealized, the demand for a higher standard stands self-condemned.

Paradoxical though it may seem, the wealthy industrialists did not themselves attempt to practise these Gandhian theories of life. They retained their love for property and chase for profit, notwithstanding their support to Gandhism.

The mass movements organized by the Indian National Congress under Gandhi's leadership and on Gandhian principles had, however, a pressure value which the industrialists appreciated. The movements became levers to secure from the British government the satisfaction of their demands such as protection, favourable ratio (a demand embodied in the Eleven Points of Gandhi), and others. (See Chapter X).

One of the main obstacles to the rapid economic development of India was the nature of agrarian relationships. An agrarian reform of a far-reaching character was a pre-condition for renovating agriculture and for improving the economic condition of the agrarian population, thereby also increasing their purchasing power. The rapid expansion of Indian industries was possible only if a prosperous agrarian population became their customer.

The Indian industrialists did not, however, stand for a programme of radical agrarian reform. This was due to the fact that in India the two classes, the zemindars and the industrialists, were often interlocked. The zemindars invested in industries and banks and the banker and the industrialist had a landed interest.

The Congress governments which were established in 1937, were criticized by left nationalists and others for pro-capitalistic leanings. (See Chapter X). The critics remarked that sections of the industrialists supported the Congress because the latter looked after their interests. The use of the police force by the Congress government during the textile workers' strike in Bombay, the enactment of the Trades Dispute Act, ban on workers' meetings in Ahmedabad and Sholapur, and incarceration and deportation of some of the labour leaders by Congress governments in various provinces, were pointed out by the critics to prove that the Congress governments favoured capitalist interests.[40]

Like other classes, the industrial bourgeoisie evolved a number of organizations, to protect its interests and press its demands.

The Bombay Millowners' Association was founded in 1875; the Indian Tea Association in 1881; the Indian Jute Mills' Association in 1884; the Ahmedabad Millowners' Association in 1891; the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in 1927; the Employers' Federation of Southern India in 1920; the All-India Organization of Industrial Employers in 1933 and the Employers' Federation of India in 1933. These were important among the organizations.

The Indian economy had already entered the monopoly phase of development. The growing tendency towards a steadily diminishing number of capitalists to establish almost monopoly over a particular branch of industry, even over an entire industry or a group of industries, has been described in the chapter on industries. This led not only to an increasing grip of a small group of industrialists and financiers over the economic life of the Indian people but also to their control over their social, political, and intellectual life. This could be seen from the instance of the Press. Birla bought over an entire group of papers which thereby invested him with the power to shape the views and mould the outlook of the reading public according to his desire. This contrasted with the earlier phase when individuals like Surendranath Banerjee, Agarkar, Tilak, and others, could run the Press and carry on independent propaganda of their views. Big business steadily brought within its orbit and control a larger and larger portion of the Press, thereby controlling the thought of the community. In other industries, also, the same tendency became perceptible. Monopoly control in economy tended to lead to monopoly control of the intellectual, political, and social life of the people.

Rise of Modern Indian Proletariat

We will now refer to another new social class which came into being in the Indian society, the modern working class.

The modern working class in India was the offspring of the modern industries, transport, and plantations, established in India during the British period. It was a class which grew in proportion as plantations, modern factories, mining industry, and transport developed in India.

The Indian proletariat was formed predominantly out of the pauperized peasants and ruined artisans, who became wage earners.[41]

The low level of the living and working conditions of the Indian workers was recognized by official as well as non-official writers.

> 'All enquiries go to show that the vast majority of workers in India do not receive more than about 1s. per day.'[42]
>
> 'We visited the workers' quarters wherever we stayed, and had we not seen them, we could not have believed that such evil places existed. . . .
>
> 'The overcrowding and insanitary conditions, almost everywhere prevailing, demonstrate the callousness and wanton neglect of their obvious duties by the authorities concerned.'[43]

S. V. Parulekar, Indian Workers' Delegate at the International Labour Conference held at Geneva in 1938, said in his speech: 'In India the vast majority of workers get a wage which is not enough to provide them with the meanest necessities of life. . . . The workers of India are unprotected against risks of sickness, unemployment, old age and death.'[44]

A large proportion of the workers had fallen into indebtedness due to their inability to maintain themselves and their families on the basis of the low wages they got. The Whitley Commission concluded that 'in most industrial centres the proportion of families or individuals who are in debt is not less than two-thirds of the whole.'[45]

The conditions of the miners were especially bad regarding wages and living conditions.[46]

The workers employed on plantations which were mostly owned by Europeans got probably the lowest wages. About this Shiva Rao wrote: 'In the Assam Valley tea-gardens . . . the average monthly earnings of men workers settled in the gardens are about Rs. 7-13-0 a month, of women and children about Rs. 5-14-0 and Rs. 4-4 respectively.'[47]

The government enacted some legislation to protect the workers such as the Indian Ports Act of 1931, the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1934, the Factories Act of 1934, the Mines Act of 1935 and the Payment of Wages Act of 1936 and others.

The labour and social legislation passed by the government was, however, described by a number of writers as inadequate to protect labour.

> 'Taking all labour legislation into account, affecting factories, mines, plantations, docks, railways, harbours, etc., it is doubtful whether more than seven or eight millions at the outside come within its protecting influence. The rest who constitute by far the greater majority of the industrial workers are engaged in small or what is known as unregulated industries.'[48]

These hard conditions of life and labour led to a steady growth of the working class movement in India from 1918 onwards.

The Indian working class developed national and class consciousness much later than the intelligentsia, the educated middle class, and the bourgeoisie. This was due to the fact that it was culturally backward, almost illiterate. The first few generations of workers composed of pauperized peasants and ruined village artisans suffered from the village backwardness even after they had migrated to cities and become workers. Even later, considerable sections of Indian workers had strong ties with the village.

Modern Proletariat, its Distinguishing Characteristics

Due to its very conditions of life and labour, the working class develops specific characteristics and capacities which distinguish it sharply from the peasantry or even the urban middle class and which make it easier for it to organize itself, unite and put up a collective struggle, to secure its class interests. First, a proletarian being propertyless is more militant than the peasant, who owning a meagre plot of ground has a stake which makes him hesitant in action. Secondly, the workers are concentrated in factories and workshops in the industrial centres. This renders the task of organization of the workers easier in contrast to that of the peasants who are scattered over a vast area and hence difficult to be welded into unions. Further, the workers operate modern power-driven machinery and are not dependent on the capricious forces of Nature like rain for the fruition of the labour they invest in the production process. This has a tendency to make the worker self-confident, logical, and clearheaded, in contrast to the peasant who develops self-diffidence and defeatism. Moreover, the labour process in which the worker is engaged is based on a more complex and extensive division of labour. The daily necessity of co-operating with other workers in the production process itself slowly engenders in the worker a collective urge and a capacity to co-operate. This is one of the reasons why trade unions spring more rapidly and strikes and collective actions are more frequent than peasant unions or peasant movements.

Further, it must also be noted that the working class occupies key positions in contemporary society. It runs factories, operates railways and buses, generates power like gas and electricity, digs coal and carries on the work of postal and telegraphic transmission. The role of this work is, socially and economically most vital to maintain modern society. This renders the social specific weight of the modern working class out of proportion with its numerical strength.

The Indian working class, like the working classes of other countries, being divorced from the modern means of production which it itself operated on the basis of wage system, increasingly gravitated to the conception and programme of a socialist society. This was reflected in the constitution of the All-India Trade Union Congress which set as its aim the establishment of a socialist state in India. As the history of Britain, France, and other countries shows, by its very position in modern society, the working class orients towards and struggles for this final goal. While other classes of contemporary Indian society desired a free India, Indian labour dreamt of a free socialist India.

There were, however, factors and forces in Indian society which operated to retard the process of self-organization of the workers for which their conditions of life and labour created a favourable premise. These were chiefly their cultural backwardness, caste and communal divisions which split them, influence of religious superstition and a fatalistic attitude towards life which weakened the will to act boldly. On the whole, however, the trade union, political, and cultural movement of the Indian working class had been steadily growing.

Growth of Working Class Movements

Though as an organized movement, the Indian labour movement began only after the end of the World War of 1914-18, there had been, before that, episodic activity of Indian labour. This activity was, however, of a sporadic and spontaneous character and was not animated by any definite conscious class purpose.

The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants was founded in 1897. Its membership was, however, composed only of salaried upper staff of the railways, mostly Anglo-Indians.

A few unions like the Printers' Union in Calcutta and the Postal Union in Bombay were also formed in the first decade of the twentieth century. These unions were, however, weak in membership and lacked a proper theoretical or programmatic basis.

The period before 1918 witnessed a few industrial strikes also. They were mostly spontaneous, unorganized, and not animated by any clear trade union consciousness.[49]

Politically also, the Indian working class remained almost unconscious and passive till 1918, the only exception being the political general strike of the Bombay textile workers in 1908 on the occasion of the incarceration of B. G. Tilak, the popular nationalist leader. It was 'the only political action' of the Indian workers and was greeted by Lenin as the symptom of their growing political awakening. (See Chapter X).

It was, however, after 1918 that the Indian working class took to the road of organization on class lines and increasingly developed trade union and political consciousness. This transformation is described in the Report of the Whitley Commission as follows:

> 'Prior to the winter of 1918-19 a strike was a rare occurrence in Indian industry. ... Lacking leadership and organization, and deeply imbued with a passive outlook on life, the vast majority of industrial workers regarded the return to the village as the only alternative to the endurance of the hard conditions in industry. The end of the war saw an immediate change. There were some important strikes in the cold weather of 1918-19; they were more numerous in the following winter, and in the winter of 1920-21, industrial strikes became almost general in organized industry. The main cause was the realization of the potentialities of the strike in the existing situation, and this was

assisted by the emergence of the trade union organizers, by the education which the war had given to the masses, and by the scarcity of labour arising from the expansion of industry, and aggravated by the great epidemics of influenza.'[50]

The economic crisis following the war, entailing suffering for the workers, the repercussion of such events as democratic revolutions in Germany, Austria, Turkey and other countries and the socialist revolution in Russia, among the Indian people including the working class, and the general ferment in the country, were also some of the causes of the beginning of the organized movement of the Indian working class after 1918.

The years 1918 to 1920 were marked with the outbreak of a series of strikes throughout the country, in a number of industrial centres including Bombay, Cawnpore, Calcutta, Sholapur, Jamshedpur, Madras, and Ahmedabad. It was the first time that such numerous and extensive strike actions took place.[51] In addition to these economic strikes, workers in Bombay and a number of other industrial towns went on a political strike as a protest against the Rowlatt Acts, demonstrating thereby their growing political consciousness. It marked the entry of the working class in the nationalist movement.

It was during this period that the first attempts to form trade unions in various industries took place in a number of centres, such as Bombay, Madras, and others. Soon, a number of trade unions sprang up in the country.

In 1920, as a result of the efforts of N. M. Joshi, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Joseph Baptista, the All-India Trade Union Congress was founded. Its declared aim was to co-ordinate 'activities of all organizations in all the provinces of India, and generally to further the interests of Indian labour in matters economic, social, and political.'[52]

The formation of the All-India Trade Union Congress was a landmark in the history of Indian labour. For the first time, the growing trade union movement found on all-India expression.

The leadership of the A.I.T.U. Congress remained for almost a decade, mainly in the hands of liberal politicians like N. M. Joshi. Nationalists like Giri and C. R. Das, in course of time, also associated themselves with it. The nationalist and reformist ideology of the leadership determined the propaganda carried on among the workers. The A.I.T.U. Congress, however, had a very small numerical basis.

After 1927, a left wing leadership developed within the trade union movement, mainly composed of left nationalists, socialists and communists, which steadily began to displace the earlier leadership. Since 1922, socialist and communist ideas had been spreading among the Indians resulting in the crystallization of socialist and communist groups in the country. These groups realizing the significance of the working class for the success of the nationalist movement organized Workers' and Peasants' Parties. The members of these parties gained increasing influence in the Trade Union Congress. Their declared object was to base the trade union movement on the principle of class struggle and also draw the workers into the orbit of the nationalist struggle with a programme of national independence to be secured by the method of direct action.

The left wing succeeded in becoming the leader of the A.I.T.U. Congress, the old leadership of the Joshi group becoming a minority force within the Congress. In 1929, a sharp difference of views occurred between the two wings over such questions as the boycott of the Royal Commission on Labour and representation at the International Conference at Geneva. It led to a split resulting in the secession of a number of trade unions which formed the Indian Trades Union Federation under the leadership of the Joshi group.

A further split in the A.I.T.U. Congress took place in 1931. The two sections, however, united in 1935.

In 1938, both the A.I.T.U. Congress and the Indian Trades Union Federation achieved unity resulting in the re-emergence of a strong All-India Trade Union Congress in the country.

The All-India Trade Union Congress had an advanced programme which included such objects as the establishment of a socialist state in India; socialization and nationalization of the means of production, distribution and exchange, as far as possible; amelioration of the economic and social conditions of the working classes; securing for the workers civil liberties like freedom of speech, press, association, assembly, and strike, participation in the national struggle for freedom from the point of view of the working classes, and abolition of privileges based on caste, creed, community, race, or religion.[53] This was an advanced democratic and socialist programme.

The total membership of the All-India Trade Union Congress which comprised trade unions in various industries, stood at 3,37,695 in 1942. This was a small per cent of the total number of workers. The low membership of the trade union organizations in India was mainly due to such reasons as the poverty and cultural backwardness of the workers danger of victimization at the hands of the employers, and others. During the period of strikes, however, trade unions had maximum influence among the workers and gained in membership.

It was after 1927 that the Indian working class entered the phase of considerable activity in the sphere of both economic and political struggle. During the years 1928-30, some of the biggest economic strikes including that of the Bombay textile workers took place. After 1927, the Indian working class began to constitute itself as an independent political force, evolved its own flag and independent class programme, and its considerable section followed its own leadership in the united nationalist movement. The workers joined the demonstrations organized by the Indian National Congress as a protest against the Simon Commission, mostly under their own flag, with their own slogans, and under their own leadership. The government considered this development as dangerous and a result of communist agitation. It, therefore, enacted the Trades Dispute Act and issued as an Ordinance the Public Safety Bill in 1929. The former restricted the freedom to strike and the latter armed the government to deport undesirable aliens. It also arrested a number of labour leaders belonging to the left wing and started their trial, famous as the Meerut Conspiracy Case. Sections of the working class also participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-33.

The great success of the Congress candidates at the elections held in 1937 was due also to the enthusiastic support of the workers to whom the Election Manifesto of the Congress had appealed. They felt, however, disillusioned about the Congress governments whom they not only accused of not fulfilling their pledge to improve their living and working conditions but also blamed for enacting undemocratic pro-capitalist legislation like the Bombay Trades Dispute Act, for police firing on the strikers in Bombay, banning labour meetings and imprisoning labour leaders.

After 1938, there was a rapid growth of trade union organizations in the country. This growth was reflected in the increase in the number of trade unions affiliated to the All-India Trade Union Congress.[54]

This new social class was acquiring increasing importance in the nationalist movement.

New Social Classes, National in Character

After narrating the interests, traits, problems, organizations, and the movements, of the principal new social classes, we will now refer to certain specific characteristics of these classes which distinguished them from the old classes of pre-British India.

One striking characteristic of the new social classes was their national character. This was due to the fact that they were integral parts of a single national economy of India and further, they lived under a single state regime. This engendered community of economic, political and other interests, of the members of each of the new social classes on an all-India national basis. As the individuals and groups comprising the class became conscious of this basic identity of interests (though they might compete among themselves within the framework of this basic identity of interests), they felt an urge to organize themselves on an all-India scale and start movement to advance their common interests on a national basis.

It was not so in pre-British India, when no single national economy or state regime existed. In pre-British India, the village artisan, for example, had no common economic ties or interests with artisans in other villages since he was a part of village autarchy. Similarly, the town handicraftsman had no common economic ties or interests with the handicraftsmen of other towns. India was, in fact, then divided into a conglomeration of almost unconnected local economies and a congeries of states. Hence, there were neither common political nor economic interests of all the artisans, handicraftsmen, or agriculturists. This led to the absence of impulse to organize and struggle on a national basis and scale.

Their Consciousness of Common Interests

Q.3 -> good stuff

The new social classes which emerged on the basis and lived under the auspices of the single national economy and state rule, stood in sharp contrast to the old classes. The industrialists, the factory and transport proletariat, the modern merchants, peasant proprietors, tenants, land labourers and even professional classes, had respective common interests and problems such as protection, ratio, wages and conditions of work, state regulation of prices, level of revenue imposition, freight, services, and others in the economic field, or franchise, representation in legislatures, civil liberties for advancing their own group interests, and others, in the political sphere.

This was why with the establishment and development of the new economic system, which brought into existence the contemporary capitalist (notwithstanding some survivals of the past society) society and centralized state regime in India, we observe that each new class, urged by the compelling force of its specific common interests, as it became conscious, moved towards a national, i.e., an all-India organization. The bourgeoisie increasingly felt as a national bourgeoisie and built up its Indian Chambers of Commerce and Federations of Industries. The proletariat felt as a national proletariat and built, in course of time, its all-India organizations such as the All-India Trade Union Congress. The kisans, though a culturally backward and poverty-stricken amorphous mass of land labourers, peasant proprietors and tenants, made the first attempt to evolve an all-India organization such as the All-India Kisan Sabha.

All such social groups, as students, women, depressed classes, doctors, editors, and others, who as they became conscious of common interests endeavoured to organize on a national scale and built organizations like the All-India Women's Conference, the All-India Medical Practitioners' Associations, the All-India Journalists and Editors Conference and others.

Even the Indian princes, the modified survival of the corresponding old class, organized themselves on an all-India basis, in the Indian Chamber of Princes.

Another feature of the new Indian society was that while the new social classes moved towards national organization and strove to accomplish their respective ends, allying or struggling among themselves as the exigencies of their interests dictated, these classes, in varying degrees, increasingly became conscious of certain common interests of Indian people such as the development of productive forces and the general economic advance of the Indian society, increased control of state power by the Indians and spread of modern education and culture. The enlightened sections of the new classes increasingly recognized that sectional advance of those classes was bound up with the general advance of the Indian society as a whole; that for the rapid development of industries, restoration and reorganization of agriculture was indispensable, and also that a prosperous agriculture implied, as a prerequisite, the expansion of industries which would relieve overpressure on agriculture; that the prosperity of the professional classes mainly depended on the general prosperity; and that spread of education and culture were vital prerequisites for social and economic progress. They also further recognized the role of political power in bringing about the social transformation. This led to the growth of a united nationalist movement of all progressive social classes and groups in the country with a common programme embodying such demands as radical administrative reform, control of executives by the legislatures, comprehensive civil liberties, universal primary and increased higher, liberal and technical education, Home Rule, Dominion Status, and Swaraj.

Uneven Development of Their Consciousness

Further, national and class consciousness did not grow among the new classes simultaneously. The intelligentsia who assimilated the ideas of nationalism, democracy, and rationalism, were the first to feel the democratic and national impulse and, thereby, also became the pioneers and leaders of all progressive social, religious, economic, political, and cultural movements. Subsequently, the educated middle class, the bourgeoisie, the proletariat, and the peasantry, in increasing numbers, developed a national outlook. It was after 1918 that the conditions for a broadbased nationalist movement matured and a united nationalist movement came into existence (see the chapter on politics).

The tendency towards a united national movement for political freedom and social, economic and cultural advance of the Indian people, was, however, retarded by the growth of communalism (to be distinguished from the growth of nationality consciousness among certain provincial and minority groups) and other factors which worked for disruption. The reactionary section of the educated class, reinforced by a section of vested interests, tried to keep alive and even accentuated mutual distrust among different communities, generally with the object of serving their own sectional interests such as those posts in services or seats in legislatures or rivalry in trade, (see Chapter XIX, 'Problem of Nationalities and Minorities'). The cultural backwardness of the people helped the communalists in their anti-national work.

The demands for a greater spread of modern education and culture, of extensive industrialization, of a democratic revision of land relations and modernization of agriculture, of democratization of the state system, of Independence, and others, which constituted the programmes of progressive new social classes, separately or jointly, had a progressive and national character since they were conceived on a national scale and aimed at building a prosperous national existence. Higher material and cultural existence for the Indian people became the objective of those programmes. The desire for democratic social and state structure, a prosperous economy and a rich advanced cultural life in a greater or lesser degree, inspired these programmes.

Growing Reactionary Trends in Propertied Classes

It should, however, be noted that all the new classes were not consistently democratic in dealing with some vital national problems. For instance, though a radical revision of land relations involving loss of the valuable rights of the zemindars, not to speak of the abolition of Zemindari itself, was essential for the restoration of agriculture and the improvement of the economic condition of the agrarian population, the Indian burgeoisie exhibited no enthusiasm for any radical agrarian reform. Here, they sacrificed the general interests of national economic advance to their sectional interests which were opposed to the overturn of Zemindari (see chapters on politics and agriculture). Another instance was found in the fact that when the Congress governments were installed, they showed their pro-capitalist bias by enacting the Bombay Trade Disputes Act which was an infringement of civil liberties.

Living in the epoch of general capitalist decline and sharpening inter-capitalist economic rivalries, increasingly dependent on British or American finance capital, interlocked with indigenous landed interests, having a colonial status and without real state power, and further, confronted with the steadily developing movements of the workers, farmers, and tenants, whose economic position was deteriorating, the national bourgeoisie was, by the very logic of its class position and interests, becoming increasingly un-progressive and even reactionary. It brought into the sphere of ideology religious mysticism, and in politics authoritarian conceptions like 'One leader, one party, one programme, and curtailment of civil liberties (workers' freedom to strike, etc.). This was the growing tendency of this class.

Twofold Movements in India

(So there were two simultaneous movements in the country, both on a national basis and on an all-India scale. The first movement comprised all separate movements of various social classes pursuing their own respective interests and aims, such as the industrialists, merchants, workers, kisans, professional classes, students, women, and others. Each social class or group organized itself and struggled to satisfy its own interests. Thus, there arose numerous and distinct movements of various classes to serve their specific interests. The interrelations of these classes were determined by every concrete historical situation which determined their episodic alliances or conflicts.

(The other movement was the joint movement of all or a number of classes, episodic or permanent, against foreign rule. It took the form of the Indian nationalist movement for Home Rule, Dominion Status, or Complete Independence. This movement was based on the common interest, namely the removal of political control of India by another nation. Each social class, however, had its own conception of the form of state and socio-economic structure after the achievement of power.)

The phenomenon of separate class movements on a national scale and a united national movement for political freedom, economic advance, and cultural progress, was non-existent in pre-British India.

However, as will be seen in subsequent chapters, the growth of the new consciousness, though increasingly enveloping more and more sections of different social classes, was still limited and slow in its tempo.

References

1 Refer Gadgil, M. N. Roy, and Krishna.
2 Refer Adhikari, and W. C. Smith.
3 Refer O'Malley, Thompson and Garratt.
4 Quoted by Ralph Fox, p. 18.
5 Refer Shelvankar.
6 Refer Wadia and Merchant.
7 Refer Palekar.
8 Refer Gadgil and Buchanan.
9 Refer Krishna.
10 Refer Altekar, Mathai and Gadgil.
11 Refer E. Thompson, Chudgar and Butler Commission Report.
12 Refer Baden Powell and R. C. Dutt.
13 Refer N. N. Ghose, p. 117.
14 Edwards and Meryvale p. 289.
15 Montague, pp. 79-80
16 Krishna, pp. 67-8.
17 Pal, p. 288.
18 Refer Ranga, Jawaharlal Nehru, Brailsford and the Floud Commission Report.
19 Tawney, p. 166.
20 Refer Ranga, Swami Sahajanand and Indulal Yagnik for the whole of the subsequent portion dealing with the kisan movement.
21 Refer Ranga.
22 Refer Ranga and Swami Sahajanand.
23 Ranga, p. 11.
24 ibid., p. 12.
25 ibid., p. 13.
26 Refer R. P. Dutt.
27 Refer Ranga.
28 Refer Pattabhi Sitaramayya.
29 Refer Tawney, Engels, Meynard, Lenin.
30 Refer Ranga.
31 Refer Gadgil, Krishna, Buch.
32 Krishna, pp. 137-8.
33 ibid., p. 176.
34 ibid., p. 178.

35 Quoted in The Statesman, Calcutta, 2 February, 1931.
36 Stalin, p. 15.
37 Krishna, p. 140.
38 Refer Gadgil, Wadia and Joshi, Shah.
39 Joan Beauchamp, p. 53.
40 Refer Ranga and Swami Sahajanand.
41 Refer Gadgil and Buchanan.
42 Purcell and Hallsworth, p. 10.
43 ibid., pp. 8-9.
44 Quoted by R. P. Dutt, pp. 351-2.
45 ibid., p. 355.
46 Refer Buchanan, Wadia and Merchant, Shiva Rao.
47 Shiva Rao, p. 128.
48 ibid., p. 210.
49 Refer Buchanan, p. 426.
50 Quoted by Joan Bauchamp, p. 135.
51 Refer R. K. Das, pp. 36-7.
52 Quoted by Shelvankar, p. 209.
53 Report of the Nineteenth Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress, Cawnpore, 1942, p. 71.
54 Refer Annual Reports of the All-India Trade Union Congress.

CHAPTER XII

THE ROLE OF THE PRESS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN NATIONALISM

Press, Its Decisive Social Role

In modern times, the Press has become a powerful social institution. This is proved by the fact that the Press has been glorified as the Fourth Estate. The Press moulds as well as mirrors all complex processes of modern life. It facilitates the exchange of thought on a mass scale in the shortest time. By its aid, conferences are mobilized, controversies settled or fought out, movements organized, institutions built up. The Press is a powerful censor of all actions of those who occupy the summits of society and hold the destiny of peoples in their hands. It, thereby, helps to establish popular democratic control over them.

The Press was a formidable weapon in the hands of the European peoples in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, in integrating themselves as nations, in organizing struggles against feudal disunity maintained by the feudal nobility, in establishing the modern national state, society, and culture. In France, the intelligentsia, the harbingers and proclaimers of the new social order and its advanced social conceptions, found in the Press an effective weapon to expose the moral decadence, cultural poverty, and reactionary social significance, of the ruling feudal class. Through the Press, Voltaire, Diderot, Holbach, Helvetius, and others disseminated scientific social ideas among the people and kindled indignation among them against the religious superstition and social oppression under which they lived. They stormed against serfdom and summoned serfs to revolt against the feudal nobility and its state. They denounced, in thousands of books and brochures, the undemocratic principles of the privilege through birth on which feudal society was based and which was made sacrosanct by the catholic superstition. They propagated, in flaming printed word, equal rights of individuals in opposition to feudal privilege. They carried on the propaganda of a programme of abolition of serfdom and the establishment of a centralized democratic national state of the French people. The Press became an indispensable weapon for the rising social forces led by the intelligentsia including political writers such as Mirabeau, Danton, Robespierre, Marat, and others, to stir up the consciousness of the people, to enlighten it with new ideas and lead them through a great historic struggle for the overthrow of the feudal state and society and replace them by the modern national state and society. In the hands of the advanced section of the French people, the Press became a weapon for the creation and development of the new, historically higher type of society, the bourgeois national democratic society which post-Revolutionary France represented. Without the help of the Press, it is extremely doubtful if the mass mobilization for the anti-feudal struggle, the establishment of a national state and society after the destruction of the feudal state and social order, and the development of the rich complex scientific and artistic culture of modern France, would have been possible.[1]

A similar role was played by the Press in England, Germany, Italy, and other modern European countries. The advanced section of the population imbued with democratic ideas could spread those ideas among the vast mass of the people because of the facility provided by the Press. After the victory over feudal society, with its autocratic state system and obscurantist medieval culture, the Press further became an instrument to create the modern culture in those countries accessible, through the printed word, to a vast portion of the people.

'Ideas become a material force when they reach out to the people.' The printing press played a big role, in the history of a number of peoples, in their national awakening, in their imbibing progressive ideas, and in their being drawn as active forces into great social, political, and cultural movements.

Its Absence in Pre-British India

The printing press did not exist in the pre-British period. Though it was first introduced in India by the Portuguese Jesuits as early as 1557 to print Christian literature, it became a real social force influencing the life of the people only in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

Manuscript newspapers were in vogue during the Mogul regimes. Generally the emperor appointed two newswriters, in every provincial centre; a *waquia-navis* who prepared a manuscript news gazette embodying information about all important public activities in the area and a *sawanih-navis* who prepared a newssheet which gave news about all important events that took place there.[2]

During the pre-British period, wealthy merchants also employed private newswriters who prepared and sent to their employers newsletters providing commercial and other news.[3]

All these official and private newspapers and newsletters were handwritten in the absence of the facility of the printing press. They reached a small section of the population only and were restricted in the range of information.

Growth of Indian Press, Upto 1900 *A.D.*

The introduction of the printing press in India was an event of revolutionary significance in the life of the Indian people. The awakening and growth of national consciousness among them gave rise to the nationalist press.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the founder of the nationalist Press in India. Though a few papers had been started by others before him, his *Sambad-Kaumudi* in Bengali published in 1821, and *Mirat-Ul-Akbar* in Persian published in 1822, were the first publications in India with a distinct nationalist and democratic progressive orientation. These papers were mainly the organs of the propaganda of social reform, and a critical discussion of religious and philosophical problems.

Fardoonji Murzban was the pioneer of the vernacular (Gujarati) Press in Bombay. It was as early as 1822 that he started the *Bombay Samachar* which, as a daily, is still in existence.

The progressive administrative measures of Lord Bentinck gave a fiillip to the growth of Indian journalism. *Bang Dutt* (in Bengali), with the effort of progressive Indians like Dwarkanath Tagore, Prasanna Kumar Tagore, and Raja Ram Mohan Roy, was founded in 1830.

In Bombay, the *Jam-e-Jamshed* (in Gujarati) which, as a daily, is still being published, was started in 1831 by P. M. Motiwala, another enterprising Parsee. Two more papers in Gujarati, *Rast Goftar* and *Akhbar-e-Saudagar*, were founded in Bomby in 1851. Dadabhai Naoroji, an outstanding leader of the Indian nationalist movement and a founder leader of the Indian National Congress, edited *Rast Goftar*.

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, the famous nationalist and social reformer, started the *Shome Prakash* in Bengali in 1858. It was conducted from the nationalist standpoint and maintained a high standard of political journalism. When disturbances broke out in 1860 in the indigo growing area in Bengal, it stoutly defended the interests of the farmers.

The enactment of the Indian Council's Act of 1861, which for the first time associated Indians with the government for legislative work, led to the growth of political awakening among the upper section of Indian society. This stimulated the expansion of both Indian and non-Indian Press in the following years. *The Times of India* was founded in Bombay in 1861, *The Pioneer* in Allahabad in 1865, *The Madras Mail* in 1868, *The Statesman* in Calcutta in 1875, and *The Civil and Military Gazette* in Lahore in 1876. All these papers were English dailies and persisted during the British period. *The Times of India* usually supported the policy of the British government in India. *The Pioneer* supported landowning and mercantile interests. *The Madras Mail* represented the interests of the European commercial community. *The Statesman* criticized the government as well as the Indian nationalist groups while *The Civil and Military Gazette* was distinctly an organ of British conservative opinion.

The nationalist Press also grew during this period. In Bengal, *The Amrit Bazar Patrika* was founded as an Anglo-Bengali weekly as the result of the combined effort of the Ghose brothers, Hemendrakumar, Shishirkumar, and Motilal, in 1868. To circumvent the Vernacular Press Act of 1878, it was converted wholly into an English weekly. It was turned into an English daily in 1891. *The Amrit Bazar Patrika* propagated strong nationalist views and had been one of the most popular of the nationalist newspapers. Due to its strong criticisms of the measures of the government, the paper was subjected to repression. A number of its editors were imprisoned in the past.

Sir Surendranath Banerjee, one of the most prominent leaders of the rising Indian nationalism, edited and owned *The Bengali* (in English) in 1879. For an article published in *The Bengali,* he was convicted for the offence of contempt of court and sentenced to two months imprisonment. *The Bengali* propogated the views of the moderate wing of the liberal school of Indian political thought.

Under the advice of Sir Surendranath Banerjee, Sir Dayal Singh Majeetia started *The Tribune* of Lahore, an English daily, in 1877. It was an influential paper in the Punjab with a liberal nationalist hue.

The political discontent, which gathered during the period of Lord Lytton's administration due to a number of measures which offended the public sentiment, gave impetus to the further growth of the Press. Virraghavachari and other patriotic Indians founded *The Hindu,* an English weekly, in Madras in 1878, which was converted into an English daily in 1889. *The Hindu* had a liberal outlook but supported, though critically, the politics of the Indian National Congress.

It was during this period the *Bangbasi* (weekly) and *Basumati* (daily/weekly), both in Bengali, were started. The former was founded by Babu Jogendranath Bose. Both were priced cheaply and mainly met the growing appetite of the people for news. Both these papers continued to be published and were organs of orthodox Hinduism in Bengal.

Indian nationalism found an organizational expression on an all-India basis in the rise of the Indian National Congress in 1885. The national awakening of the upper strata of the Indian people gathered rapid momentum after this. By the end of the century, a new current of political thought crystallized.

Alongside and almost contraposed to the leaders of the liberal nationalist school, emerged leaders of extremist or militant nationalism such as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo and Barindra Ghose and Lala Lajpat Rai.

The broadening and deepening of the nationalist movement after 1889 was reflected in the growth of the nationalist Press of various hues. Tilak started *The Kesari*, a Marathi journal, in which he expounded the ideology and methodology of struggle for national freedom conceived by the new school. Tilak was a journalist of consummate ability and, in his hands, *The Kesari* and *The Maratha* (an English weekly) became effective weapons to instil militant nationalist sentiments and ideas among the people. *The Kesari* continued to be published in Marathi as a bi-weekly. Tilak was sentenced to imprisonment twice for his article in *The Kesari*.

The Jugantar and *The Bandemataram* were the two influential organs of the Bengal group of militant nationalists led by the Ghose brothers to spread their views of national freedom and reconstruction. They were organs of agitation against the Partition of Bengal and of propaganda of Swadeshi and Boycott.

The national awakening extended to the sphere of social reform also. *The Indian Social Reformer*, an English weekly, primarily devoted to the propaganda of social reform, was started in Bombay in 1890.

Mr. Sachhidananda Sinha founded *The Hindustan Review*, an English monthly, in 1899. The magazine had a liberal political and ideological tone.

Its Subsequent Development

In Madras, Mr. G. A. Natesan started in 1900 *The Indian Review*, an English monthly.

In Calcutta, Ramanand Chatterjee started in 1907 *The Modern Review*, an English monthly, the most famous monthly in India. The magazine was devoted to themes of social, political, historical, and scientific interest. It also gave interesting and useful information about international events. It usually endorsed the right wing in the Indian National Congress.

After the split in the Indian National Congress in 1907 at Surat between the Moderates and the Extremists, the leaders of the former group such as Sir Pherozshah Mehta, Sir Dinshaw Wacha, and Mr. Gokhale, acutely felt the necessity of an organ of propaganda for their views in Bombay.

Sir Pherozshah Mehta started The *Bombay Chronicle* in 1913 with B. G. Horniman as its first editor. Under the able and experienced editorship of Horniman *The Bombay Chronicle* soon became popular.

During the First World War (1914-18), while one section of the nationalist leaders (the Liberals and Gandhi), trusted the pledge of the British government to meet the political demands of the Indian people and stood for wholehearted support to Britain in war, another section led by Tilak stood for organizing countrywide agitation for securing self-government without delay. Dr. Annie Besant, who sympathized with this demand, took over *The Madras Standard* (in English) and changed its name to *New India* which became the propaganda organ of the Home Rule movement.

The Servants of India Society, in 1918, started its official organ, *Servant of India* (an English weekly), under the editorship of Shrinivas Shastri. The paper gave the analysis and solution of the Indian problem from a liberal nationalist viewpoint. It ceased publication in 1939.

The immediate post-war period witnessed the first wave of nationalist mass movement in India. It was the result of a profound political and economic crisis and the resultant ferment among the people. The movement was led by Gandhi, C. R. Das, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Ali Brothers, Hazarat Mohani, and other leaders of the Congress and Khilafat organizations. The movement expressed as well as further intensified the national consciousness of the Indian people. This led to the further growth of the Indian nationalist press.

In 1919 Gandhi edited *Young India*, making it the mouthpiece of his political philosophy, programmes, and policies. Subsequently, he also started *Harijan* (a weekly published in English, Hindi and a number of vernaculars), after 1933.

Pandit Motilal Nehru started *The Independent* (an English daily), in Allahabad in 1919 which served as the political propaganda organ of the Congress official viewpoint. Shivaprasad Gupta founded *The Aj* (a daily/weekly) in Hindi. The declared object in starting *The Aj* was to bring politics and culture to the masses who did not know Enklish. In subsequent years, a number of political and literary magazines and newspapers sprang up in the Hindi language.

Sometime after the end of the Non-Co-operation movement, a section of the Indian National Congress led by Nehru (senior) and C. R. Das formed the Swaraj Party within the Congress differing from the other section on the issue of Council Entry. The latter wanted to maintain the boycott of the councils and stood for exclusively implementing Gandhi's Constructive Programme. The leader of the Swaraj Party started *The Hindustan Times* (an English daily) in Delhi in 1922 under the editorship of K. M. Pannikar to carry on propaganda for its programme.

The People, an English nationalist weekly, was also started during this period in Lahore due to the effort of Lala Lajpat Rai.

After 1923, socialist and communist ideas began to spread slowly in India.

Kranti, a Marathi weekly and an official organ of the Workers' and Peasants' Party of India, and *Spark* and *New Spark,* both English weeklies respectively edited by M. G. Desai and Lester Hutchinson, both of whom were involved in the Meerut Conspiracy case, had, as their declared aim, the spread of Marxism in India and support to the independent political and economic movements of the workers and peasants and the struggle for national independence.

Between 1930 and 1939, the workers' and peasants' movements gathered further strength and scope. Socialist and communist ideas penetrated to Congress youth. Thus there came into existence the Congress Socialist Party, which published *The Congress Socialist,* an English weekly, as its main official organ. The communists had *National Front* and subsequently *Peoples' War,* both English weeklies, as principal organs of their propaganda.

M. N. Roy, differing from the official communists, formed his own group with *Independent India,* an English weekly, as its main official organ.

In 1930, *The Free Press Journal,* an English daily, edited by S. Sadanand, was founded. It was very cheaply priced. It was a staunch supporter of the Congress demand and struggle for independence.

With the social, political, and cultural advance of the Indian people, the newspaper Press expanded. Magazines, dailies, and weeklies were published in all provinces, in all important towns, in vernaculars, English, Hindi, and Urdu. The journalistic literature embraced all subjects such as politics economics, social, educational and cultural problems, and problems of technical and scientific significance. Only the most important of them have been mentioned above.

Different political parties, cultural and scientific groups, socio-economic groups such as landlords, industrialists, workers and kisans, and social groups such as students, women, and depressed classes, had their special Press organs to propagate their programmes and views. Communal organizations, such as the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha, published their own organs.

About 4,000 printed newspapers and magazines were published in the country, in 1941, in seventeen languages.[4]

Indian Press, Its Broad Political Trends

These newspapers and periodicals could be divided into a number of categories.

The Statesman, The Times of India, The Civil and Military Gazette, The Pioneer, and The Madras Mail, were prominent organs which generally defended the views and actions of the British government and administration in India.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, The Bombay Chronicle, The Bombay Sentinel, The Hindustan Times, The Hindustan Standard. The Free Press Journal, Harijan, National Herald, and *National Call*, were prominent nationalist dailies and weeklies in English. *The Hindu, The Leader, The Indian Social Reformer, The Modern Review* were some the outstanding journals reflecting the liberal school of nationalism. Broadly, the nationalist papers supported the Indian National Congress, its programmes and policies, while liberal papers supported programmes of the Indian National Congress critically. *Dawn* represented the views of the Muslim League.

Student organizations in the country published their own organs such as *Student* and *Sathi*.

The vernacular Press was also rapidly expanding in India. *Jana Sakti, Anand Bazar Patrika, Bangbasi*, in Bengali; *Kesari, Lokamanya, Navakal*, and *Kirloskar*, in Marathi; *Bombay Samachar, Janmabhoomi, Hindustan* and *Praja Mitra, Sandesh*, and *Vandemataram*, in Gujarati; *Matribhumi*, in Malayalam; *Swadeshamitram* in Tamil; these and others were some of the prominent dailies and weeklies in these languages.

Ittihad, Ajmal, Hamdam, Khilafat, Tej, and *Riyasat,* were some of the prominent organs published in Urdu.

Vir Arjun, Aj, Sainik, and *Vishwamitra,* were some of the prominent Hindi publications.

Reuters extended to India in 1860, the Associated Press of India founded in 1905, the Free Press News Service in 1927, and the United Press of India in 1934, were the principal news services in the country.

Its Slow and Meagre Growth, Reasons

Though the newspaper Press was steadily expanding in India. the rate of its growth was slow.

Mass illiteracy, great poverty, and repressive Press Laws. were considered by the critics as handicaps to the rapid growth of the newspaper Press in the country. A number of Press Acts, requiring security from the press and placing other handicaps on its free functioning, constituted a formidable obstacle in the way of the swift growth of the Indian Press.

Since the Press was a powerful weapon in the development of Indian nationalism and of the nationalist movement, it was subjected to restrictions by the British government which was reluctant to satisfy the aspirations and grant the demands of Indian nationalism. The very fact that the British government had to enact, during its rule, a series of Press Acts of varying stringency, eloquently proved the decisive role played by the Press in the development of the nationalist movement.

Indian nationalism, from its very inception, recognized the value of the Press in rousing the people to national consciousness and put up a tenacious resistance to all attempts to curtail its freedom. The history of the struggle for the freedom. The history of the struggle for the freedom of the Press had, therefore, been an integral part of the nationalist struggle. The freedom of the Press was one of the basic democratic liberties which Indian nationalism, in all its stages of evolution, cherished and fought for.

The peculiar situation of India which was governed by a foreign nation made a free Indian Press a controversial question even among the British themselves. During the nineteenth century, while Wellesley, Minto, Adam, Canning, and Lytton stood for a drastic restriction of the freedom of the Press, Hastings, Metcalfe, Macaulay, and Ripon, argued in favour of a more or less free Press in India.[5]

On the ground that a foreign nation ruled a backward people and that a free Press would seriously damage the discipline of the army, even liberal British leaders like Sir Thomas Munro and Lord Elphinstone, favoured strong restrictions to be placed on the Indian Press.[6]

Repressive Measures Against Press, Their History

Historically, however, the history of the Indian Press was the history of the increasing diminution of its liberty, in spite of minor vicissitudes. The history of Indian nationalism proves that, in the proportion that it grew, the freedom of the Press in India suffered a proportional curtailment.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the pioneer of the Indian nationalist Press, was also the first fighter for the freedom of the Indian Press. When, during the period of Adam, an attack on the freedom of the Press was launched, he along with enlightened nationalist Indians such as Chandra Kumar Tagore, Harchandra Ghose, Dwarkanath Tagore, Gauri Charan Banerji, and Prasanna Kumar Tagore, drafted a petition to be submitted to the Supreme Court of Calcutta. The petition condemned the projected attack on the freedom of the Press as undemocratic, inexpedient, and reactionary. The signatories of this petition were the pioneers of the struggle for the freedom of the Press in India. Miss Sophia Collet extolled this petition as 'the Areopagitica of Indian history'. R. C. Dutt described it as the beginning of 'that system of constitutional agitation for political rights which their countrymen have learnt to value so much in the present day.'[7]

It was the Marquess of Wellesley who in 1799 appointed an official censor entrusted with the duty of passing all matter for publication and framed drastic rules to punish those who infringed them. Hastings abolished the Press censorship and removed most of the restrictions in 1818. The atmosphere of relative freedom of the Press, which the measures of Hastings created, stimulated the emergence of Indian newspapers such as the *Bombay Samachar* published in 1822.

Adam, the Acting Governor-General in 1823, launched repressive measures against the Press. This provoked the protest of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his nationalist compeers. Their petition was, however, rejected by the Supreme Court and the Press remained subjected to the new restrictions till 1835.

Metcalfe, assisted by the liberal Macaulay, put forward an Act in 1835 repealing the restrictions on the Press in Bengal and Bombay. The Act also made it no longer necessary to get a licence for the printing of books and papers.

Till 1857, there was considerable freedom of the Press in the country. The outbreak of the Revolt prompted Lord Canning to pass the Press Act of 1857 known as the Gagging Act due to its drastic nature. Under the Act, the government could control the establishment of printing presses and prevent, if it wished, the circulation of printed books and papers. This Act was, however, to operate for one year only.

The Press and Registration of Books Act enacted in 1867 restricted the freedom of the printing and publication of books and newspapers. In 1878, the Vernacular Press Act imposing serious restrictions on the freedom of the vernacular Press, which was rapidly growing and becoming the organ of nationalist views and criticism of the British government, was passed.

Lord Ripon, who had liberal views, repealed the Vernacular Press Act in 1882.

Till 1908, the Indian Press enjoyed considerable freedom. However, due to the phenomenal growth of the nationalist movement in the previous ten years, the government decided to curtail the freedom of the Press. The Newspaper (Incitement to Offences) Act was passed in 1908 and the Indian Press Act in 1910.

Sir Jenkins on Press Act of 1910

The Press Act of 1910 was the most severe measure hitherto adopted by the British government in India against the Indian Press. It considerably extended the power of the executive over the Press and its free functioning by empowering it to demand heavy securities which could be forfeited at will and to confiscate printing plants of offending papers. Though the right of appeal to the courts was provided, this right was not of much value. Sir Lawrence Jenkins, an English judge of an Indian Court, remarked: 'The provisions of section 4 are very comprehensive, and its language is as wide as human ingenuity could make it. It is difficult to see to what lengths the operation of this section might not plausibly be extended by an ingenious mind. They would certainly extend to writings that many even command approval. . . . An attack on that degraded section of the public which lives in the misery and shame of others would come within this widespread net; the praise of a class might not be free from risk. Much that is regarded as standard literature might undoubtedly be caught.'[8]

Section 4 alluded to was a part of the Press Act of 1910. It was subsequently incorporated in the Acts of both 1931 and 1932.

This comment of an English Judge of an Indian High Court was a strong testimony proving the repressive nature of the Press Act of 1910.

As a result of country-wide nationalist agitation against the Act as well as the previous Acts, the Press Law Repeal and Amendment Act of 1922 was passed whereby the Press Act of 1910 and the Newspaper Act of 1908 were repealed. and the Press and Registration of Books Act and the Post Office Act were relaxed.

Press Acts of 1931 *and* 1932, *Their Significance*

The Indian Press enjoyed relative freedom till 1930. The nationalist movement, in its mass form, had declined and subsided between 1922 and 1929. But again with the rise of the new wave of the movement in 1929, the government decided to arm itself with powers to curb the Press. The Indian Press Emergency Powers Act was passed in 1931. The Act was subsequently reinforced and expanded by the incorporation into it of the Emergency Powers Ordinances of 1932. It was also amended by sections 14, 15 and 16 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1932. 'The amending Act of 1932 (the Ordinance Act) rendered the Press law more drastic. extended its scope and armed the Executive with greater powers than even the Act of 1931.'[9]

The Press Law of 1931 in its subsequently amended form seriously curtailed the freedom of the Indian Press. Under it, the Executive had wide powers to demand securities and to forfeit them. Its scope was so comprehensive that the newspapers of even moderate or liberal types were not beyond its reach. The Act explicitly described 'the better control of the Press' as its aim. Among the new offences against which it was directed, were included publications which tended directly or indirectly, 'to bring into hatred or contempt His Majesty or the Government established by law in British India, or the administration of justice or any class or section of His Majesty's subjects, or excite disaffection towards His Majesty or the Government'. It also penalized intimidation; interference with the administration or maintenance of law and order, payment of land revenue, rent of agricultural land, or anything recoverable as arrears of rent or other items; inducing public servants to resign office; promoting feelings of hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects.[10]

The Act was thus very comprehensive in its range. 'A study of the clauses . . . will show the discretion of magistrate, police officers and the "Local Government" decides what the Press may or may not do.'[11]

The government itself recognized the drastic nature of the Act. Sir Harry Haig, the Home Member, remarked in the Central Assembly, 'I recognize, Sir, and the Government fully recognize that the provisions . . . are irksome to responsible editors, and there are many such. I am well aware, Sir, of the difficulties that well conducted papers feel.'[12]

Under the Press Law of 1932, the government frequently prohibited the publication of certain news items in the papers of one province while those in other provinces published them. It also interfered with 'double-column headlines, display types, even the arrangement and position given to a news item' and the publication of photographs of certain political leaders. These were felt as very galling restrictions by Indian journalists and publicists.

The Foreign Relations Act of 1932 penalized publications calculated to interfere 'with the maintenance of friendly relations between His Majesty's Government and the Governments of certain foreign States'. The Indian States (Protection) Act was enacted in 1934 'to protect the Administrations of States in India which are under the suzerainty of His Majesty from activities which tend to subvert, or to excite disaffection towards, or to obstruct such Administrations'. This Act also penalized all publications which tended 'to bring into hatred or contempt or to excite disaffection towards the Administration established in any State in India.'

These two Acts further diminished the freedom of the Indian Press.

Three News Agencies

There existed by 1941 three main news agencies in the country, namely, Reuters, the Associated Press, and the Free Press News Service. The government subscribed to the first two and used them for transmitting government news. The third was an Indian enterprise and selected and distributed news from the nationalist standpoint.

The practical monopoly of Reuters (which had the support of the government) to supply India with all foreign news and the outside world with Indian news prevented Indian nationalists from providing the outside world with information of Indian events selected and interpreted from the nationalist standpoint.

To suit the policy of the British government, Reuters delayed transmission of certain types of news to the outside world. 'The facts of the Amritsar massacre were withheld from knowledge for over seven months, and were as little realized by the general public in Britain. . . .'[13]

The government support in various ways was regarded indispensable for establishing a successful news agency by those Indians who worked for it. 'We reached the conclusion that so long as the Government shows partisanship to certain news organizations, financially and otherwise, it is impossible for other companies to become established.'[14]

There existed restrictions also on the importation of certain species of foreign literature into India, primarily of left character. There was a section of the Sea Customs Department to enforce these restrictions. This ban prevented the Indian people from getting adequate information about some of the movements and ideologies of other countries.

The Indian nationalist movement always agitated against the various measures of the government to diminish the freedom of the Press. The struggle for the freedom of the Press was an integral part of the national movement. Various groups and organizations such as the group of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his fellow pioneers of Indian nationalism, the Moderates, the Liberals, the Extremists, the Besantine Home Rulers, the Indian National Congress under Gandhi, the Socialists, the Communists, Students' Organizations, Trade Unions, Kisan Sabhas, and the All-India Civil Liberties Union, criticized the various measures of the government which reduced the liberty of the Press.

This only demonstrated the great importance of the Press for the growth and development of the nationalist movement.

The All-India Civil Liberties Union working for the defence of the democratic liberties of the Indian people also fought for the liberty of the Press.

There were other organizations such as the All-India Journalists' Association, All-India Editors' Conference, and Progressive Writers' Conference, which also fought for the freedom of the Press.

Indian Press, Its Progressive Role

The Press was a powerful factor in building and developing Indian nationalism and the nationalist movement, social, cultural, political, and economic.

The national movement, on its political side, was possible because of the facility of political education and propaganda provided by the Press. With its help, the Indian nationalist groups were able to popularise among the poeple the ideas of representative government, liberty, democratic institutions, Home Rule, Dominion Status, and Independence. Through it, they could carry on daily criticism of the measures of the British government and administration and educate the people in the understanding of political problems.

The Press was a weapon, in the hands of the nationalist groups, to popularize among the people their respective political programmes, policies, and methods of struggle, and to form organizations with a broad popular basis.

Without the Press, all-India conferences of nationalist organizations could not have been prepared and held and big political movements organized and directed. For instance, it was to *Young India* of Gandhi, the leader of the Indian National Congress, that the Congressmen and Congress supporters looked for directives for their political activities during the great mass movement of 1930-32.

Since the Press was a powerful weapon of the nationalist struggle, Indian nationalists of all hues staunchly fought for its freedom throughout the existence of the Indian nationalist movement.

The vital role of the Press in the building of Indian nationalism and national movement could be shown by the fact that, 'In India, from Raja Ram Mohan Roy to Keshub Chunder Sen, Gokhale, Tilak, Pherozshah Mehta, Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Banerjee, C. Y. Chintamani, M. K. Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, there is a distinguished line of public men who have used, and are using, the Press as a medium for the dissemination of their ideas of "moral values."[15]

The Press alone made possible the large scale, swift, and constant exchange of views among different social groups inhabiting various parts of the country. The establishment and extension of the Press in India brought about a closer social and intellectual contact between provincial populations. It also made possible the daily and extensive discussion of programmes of inter-provincial and national collaboration in spheres of social, political and cultural matters, and the holding of national conferences, social, political, and cultural. National committees were appointed to implement the programmes adopted at these conferences throughout the country. This led to the building of an increasingly rich, complex, social, and cultural, national existence.

The Press also helped the growth of provincial literatures and cultures, which were provincial in form and national in content. In Bengal, Maharashtra, Andhra, Gujarat, Malabar, U.P. and other provinces, there came into existence rich provincial literatures, poetic, dramatic, and novel.

The Press was an effective weapon in the hands of social reform groups to expose social evils such as caste fetters, child marriage, ban on remarriage of widows, social, legal, and other inequalities from which women suffered and others. It also helped them to organize propaganda on a vast scale against such inhuman institutions as untouchability. It became a weapon in their hands to proclaim to the broad mass of the people, principles, programmes and methods, of democratic reconstruction of the Indian society. It was also by means of the Press that social reformers, all over the country, were able to maintain a permanent discussion about the best programmes of the solution of social evils and to prepare and hold All-India Social Conferences with a view to chalking out a common line.

Further, the Press also brought the Indian people knowledge of the happenings in the international world. The Press has been one of the principal forces which has helped various nations to build up a world outlook and shape their own national programmes and policies on the basis of a comprehension of world development as a whole. The Press became also a weapon to construct solidarity ties between the progressive forces of different countries.

Such was the vital role of the Press in the building up of an increasingly strong national sentiment and consciousness among the Indian people, in the development and consolidation of their growing nationalist movement, in the creation of national and provincial literatures and cultures, and in the forging of bonds of fraternity with other progressive peoples and classes in the outer world.

Prerequisites of Its Sound Development

The following were the chief factors which obstructed the development of a free, extensive, well ramified, and progressive Press in India:

(1) Restrictions imposed on the freedom of the Press by the government.

(2) Widespread poverty of the people which restricted the sale of papers, periodicals, and publications, even among the literate sections.

(3) Mass illiteracy

(4) Growing tendency of monopoly control of the Press by a few wealthy British and Indian groups. (The increasing growth of monopoly in the sphere of the Press only reflected the general growth of monopoly in economy).

Therefore, it logically followed that large scale and free use of the Press as a level of social, economic, and cultural progress of the mass of the Indian people, was possible only an independent India free both from the British rule and m foreign and Indian vested interests.

References

1 Refer Laski, Tawney, Kropotkin.
2 Refer O'Malley, p. 189.
3 ibid., p. 189.
4 ibid., p. 188.
5 Refer O'Malley, Margarita Barns.
6 Refer Margarita Barns, p. 251.
7 R. C. Dutt, quoted in O'Malley.
8 Indian Law Reports, No. 41 (Calcutta).
9 Report of the Indian Delegation, p. 288.
10 ibid., pp. 290-1.
11 ibid., p. 292.
12 ibid., p. 292.
13 R. P. Dutt, p. 36.
14 Margarita Barns, (2), p. 188.
15 Margarita Barns, p. xv.

CHAPTER XIII

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS REFORM MOVEMENTS AS THE EXPRESSION OF NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC AWAKENING

Reform Movements, Expression of Rising Nationalism

The various socio-reform and religio-reform movements which took place in India during the British rule were the expression of the rising national consciousness and spread of the liberal ideas of the west among the Indian people. These movements increasingly tended to have a national scope and programme of reconstruction in the social and religious spheres.

In the social sphere, there were movements of caste reform or caste abolition, equal rights for women, a campaign against child marriage and a ban on widow remarriage, a crusade against social and legal inequalities.

In the religious sphere, there sprang up movements which combated religious superstitions and attacked idolatry, polytheism, and hereditary priesthood.

These movements, in varying degrees, emphasized and fought for the principles of individual liberty and social equality and stood for nationalism.

The new society which was developing in India since the advent of the British rule had distinct needs differing from those of the old society.

The new intelligentsia, which imbibed the Liberal western culture, recognized these needs and launched movements to reform or revolutionize social institutions, religious outlooks, and ethical conceptions inherited from the past, since they felt that these were obstacles to national advance. They were convinced that the new society could politically, culturally, and economically develop only on the basis of liberal principles such as the recognition of individual liberty, freedom of unfettered expression of human personality, and social equality.

The reform movements represented the striving of the conscious and progressive sections of the Indian people to democratize social institutions and remodel old religious outlooks to suit the new social needs.

It was the grievance of the Indian social reformers that the slow advance of social reform was due to the insufficient support to it by the British government which, they asserted, did not actively assist them in the work of storming the citadels of social reaction and injustices in the country. The rate at which the social reform legislation was enacted was too slow and generally undertaken under the pressure of the advanced opinion in the country. It is true that in the first half of the nineteenth century, the British rulers themselves initiated such progressive legislation as the abolition of slavery, suttee, and infanticide. However, their attitude suffered a change later on. In fact, the Age of Consent Act passed in 1891 was the only important social reform legislation enacted by the government during many decades prior to that date. This only strengthened the determination of the leaders of the Indian national movement to secure political power so that they could use it to accelerate the tempo of social and religious reform in India.

Their Democratic Yearnings

Indian nationalism felt democratic yearnings from its birth. The socio-reform and religio-reform movements embodied these yearnings. In varying degrees, these movements sought to eliminate privilege from the social and religious fields, to democratize social and religious institutions of the country, to reform or dissolve such disruptive institutions as caste which were obstacles to national unity. They sought to establish equal rights of all individuals irrespective of caste or sex.

The reformers argued that such democratization of institutions and social relations was vitally necessary to build up a sound national unity to achieve political freedom and social, economic, and cultural advance of the Indian people.

The national democratic awakening found expression in all fields of national life. In politics, it gave birth to the movement of administrative reform, Self-Government, Home Rule, Dominion Status and, finally, Independence. In the social and religious spheres, Indian nationalism proclaimed the principles of individual liberty, equality, and self-determination. It attacked the undemocratic principle of birth and exclusive privileges based on birth, on which such institutions as castes were reared. Indian nationalism was thus democratic in essence and, as such, struggled against both medievalism and foreign rule. The socio-reform and religio-reform movements were the expression of the national awakening in India and aimed at a revision of the medieval social structure and religious outlook on a more or less democratic basis, i.e. on the principle of individual liberty and human equality.

CHAPTER XIV

CRUSADE AGAINST CASTE SYSTEM

Caste System, 'Steel Frame of Hinduism'

THE CASTE system of the Hindus, which divided the Hindu community into a multitude of almost hermetically sealed groups, hierarchically graded and based on birth, was one of the principal targets of the socio-reform movement.

The caste system was 'the steel frame of Hinduism'. It was more ancient than the Vedas which recorded its existence at that time. Originally, the Hindu society seems to have been differentiated into three or four castes. Subsequently, however, as a result of the operation of such factors as racial admixture, geographical expansion, and growth of crafts which brought into existence new vocations, the original castes (*varnas*) broke up into various smaller castes and sub-castes (*jatis*).

While Hinduism made for the cultural unity of all Hindus in the past, the caste system socially disintegrated them into an ever increasing number of groups and sub-groups. In all vital social matters such as marriage, vocation and dining, each such group or sub-group was an exclusive unit.

The caste system was undemocratic and authoritarian in the extreme. The castes constituting the series were hierarchically graded, each caste being considered inferior to those above it and superior to those below it. The status of a man born in a particular caste was determined by the rank of that caste in this hierarchy. Once born in that caste, his status was predetermined and immutable. Thus birth decided his status which could not be altered by any talent he might show or wealth he might accumulate.

Similarly, the caste in which a man was born predetermined what vocation he would pursue. He had no choice. Thus birth decided the occupation of a man.

The rule of endogamy governed every caste or sub-caste. A person belonging to one caste could not marry a person of the other caste. Thus birth restricted the zone of selection in the matter of matrimony.

'It (caste) has given an aristocracy of birth not of merit. It has rendered the free adaptation of individual talent and capacity to particular social work for which it is best fitted, impossible. It has stifled initiative, self-confidence and the spirit of enterprise. It prevents the growth of a nationality and the development of a democratic state. It has created the untouchable problem.'[1]

Since the caste system was hierarchically graded, it was based on social and legal inequalities. For example, at the apex of this social pyramid stood the caste of Brahmins who had the monopoly right to officiate as priests with exclusive access to all higher religious and secular learning and knowledge while, at the base swarmed the mass of Shudras together with the untouchables and even unapproachables whom the scheme of the Hindu society, sanctified by the Hindu religion and enforced by the coercive power of the Hindu state, had assigned the duty of serving all other castes and constrained to follow, under the threat of severest penalty, such low vocations as those of scavengers, tanners and others.

The uniqueness of the caste system did not consist in that it was based on differences of functions. Its specificness lay in the fact that it made birth the basis of social groupings. 'It implies not only the negation of equality but the organization of inequality exclusively on the basis of inheritance. Differences there will be in any imaginable society, differences of function at all events. It is not in recognizing their inevitability that caste is peculiar; it is in the method it adopts to systematize and control them.'[2]

Caste Vs. Classes

Since birth determined the caste of a person, he could not alter it. It is in this that the caste contrasted with the modern class, the offspring of the capitalist system of society.

> 'Castes were groups with a well-developed life of their own, the membership whereof, unlike that of voluntary associations and of classes, was determined not by selection but by birth. The status of a person depended not on his wealth as in the classes of modern Europe, but on the traditional importance of the caste in which he had the luck of being born. On the distinction between caste and class, as far only as cleavage into well-marked groups is concerned, MacIver observes: "Whereas in eastern civilizations the chief determinant of class and status was birth, in the western civilization of today wealth is a class determinant of equal or perhaps greater importance, and wealth is a less rigid determinant than birth: it is more concrete, and thus its claims are more easily challenged; itself a matter of degree, it is less apt to create distinctions of kind, alienable, acquirable, and transferable, it draws no such permanent lines of cleavage as does birth."[3]
>
> 'A class has no council, standing or occasional, to regulate the conduct and guide the morals of its members, apart from the laws of the community as a whole.'[4]

In fact, the caste committees had quasi-legal powers to punish its offending members such as excommunication, fines and even corporal punishment. A member of a caste owed allegiance first to his caste and then to the community. This naturally weakened the feeling of community solidarity in him.

Since each caste had its own conception of the norm of conduct which it forced on its members, it became culturally separated from other castes which had other conceptions of ethics. Each caste thus became a separate socio-cultural group.

Further, the caste system was sanctified by the sanction of religion. Its very genesis was attributed to God Brahman.[5] If a member of a caste infringed the caste rules, he did not merely commit a crime against the caste but perpetrated a sin against religion. Thus, religion fortified the hold of the caste over its members.

In fact, the basic demand of Hinduism on its follower was that he should gladly accept 'the social position in which he was born', i.e. his caste since it was divinely ordained and should fulfil meticulously the duties which that caste assigned to him. This alone would guarantee salvation (Moksha) for him and make him eligible for higher levels of cosmic existence after his death.

Since caste controlled his life including such vital personal affairs as marriage, vocation, and social intercourse such as eating with others, and since behind the imperatives of the caste stood the sanction of religion, the coercive power of the Hindu state as well as the penal authority with which the caste itself was armed, the individual was almost completely shorn of personal liberty. He could not choose his profession; he could not marry whom he desired; he could not eat with whomever he liked. And, further, the rank of the caste in which he was born, in the finely graded caste hierarchy, determined his social status and position in the eye of the law of the state which was not uniform but varied according to the caste a person belonged to.

The hierarchic construction of the castes gave rise to inequalities among them. Even in matters of residence, the lower castes were segregated from the higher ones and were assigned separate quarters of the village or the town for residence. The untouchables and other 'impure' castes who formed the nethermost layers of the caste-ridden Hindu society were further debarred from the right of using the public wells and tanks. The right of temple entry was also denied to them. Under the aegis of the caste system, social oppression reached even such inhuman limits that certain sections of the lowest castes were not merely branded as untouchables but even unapproachables. Their mere sight contaminated and an unapproachable who, wittingly or unwittingly, happened to come within the ocular vision of the holy Brahmin, was often meted out most brutal punishment.[6]

Caste System, Its Chief Features

Hierarchic gradation, social and other inequalities, endogamy, restrictions on dining, and the lack of freedom regarding the choice of vocation, were the principal features of the caste system.

> "To sum up, in each linguistic area, there were about two hundred groups called castes with distinct names, usually birth on one of which determined the status in society of a given individual, which were divided into about two thousand smaller units—generally known as sub-castes—fixing the limits of marriage and effective social life and making for specific cultural tradition. These major groups were held together by the possession, with few exceptions, of a common priesthood. . . . Complete acceptance of the system in its broadest outlines by the groups making up that system and their social and economic interdependence in the village not only prevented the exclusivist organiza-

tion of the groups from splitting up the system into independent units, but created a harmony in civic life. Of course, this harmony was not the harmony of parts that are equally valued, but of units which are rigorously subordinated to one another.'[7]

The caste system thrived and persisted for many centuries primarily because of the low level of economic existence of the Indian people. The pre-capitalist economy on which it rested was primarily based on the village autarchy, the absence of appreciable development of exchange relations, and extremely weak and meagre means of transport.

The caste system lost whatever usefulness it might have in the past under the new social, economic, and political conditions ushered in by the British conquest of India and its far-reaching consequences.

Growing Disintegration of Caste System, Causes

The economic foundations of the caste were shattered by the new economic forces and forms introduced into India as a result of the British conquest. The destruction of the village autarchy, the creation of private property in land, the steady industrialization of the country which evolved new vocations and created modern cities which were the solvents of a number of caste taboos and restrictions, the spread of a network of railways and buses which made possible, for the first time in the Indian history, mass travelling, resulting in willing and unwilling mass contact—these were some of the principal factors which undermined the vocational basis of the castes and exclusive habits of their members.

Impact of New Property Relations

With the creation of the right to own property in land and manipulate it at will and of the scope for other professions, industrial, commercial, administrative or liberal such as that of a doctor or a lawyer, centrifugal tendencies appeared in the joint family in the village. The demand for partition of property increased among its members who frequently migrated to the town and took to other vocations.

The new land revenue system together with the technical backwardness of Indian agriculture, the rising indebtedness of the agriculturists and overpressure on agriculture due to the ruination of the handicrafts not balanced by any proportionate industrial development in the country, also forced a section of these farmers to migrate to cities, where they became factory workers or domestic servants. This also disorganized the vocational basis of caste.

The British government expropriated the caste committees of penal powers to chastise its members for the infringement of caste rules. This together with economic necessity as well as new economic opportunities created by the new political and economic situation, led the members of castes to cease following the hereditary ancestral vocations prescribed to them by the castes. A Brahmin, instead of pursuing the caste-dictated function of a priest or a teacher, became a doctor, a merchant, a millowner, a clerk, or an air pilot. 'Economic necessity or ambition is leading educated Brahmins to careers in such industries as the leather trade, which fifty years ago would have been regarded with horror.'[8]

Impact of Modern Cities

Modern industries brought into being modern cities honeycombed with cosmopolitan hotels, restaurants, theatres, trams, buses, railways. The demarcation observed by the members of different castes regarding eating food in proximity to or physical contact with those of other castes, steadily crumbled. Necessity to associate with the members of other castes and even communities in vocation or at social functions accelerated the process of this breakdown. 'Intercourse with Europeans and social entertainments associated with political or economic conferences are bringing together men and women of all castes and no caste.'[9]

A Brahmin mill magnate dined at the Taj with a Shudra fellow-mill magnate. The modest hotels and restaurants catering for the workers and middle classes became crowded in cities with persons belonging to all castes and even creeds.

In trains and buses one occasionally rubbed shoulders with members of the depressed classes, sometimes even with an untouchable. The parafernalia of modern social existence did not recognize caste or communal divisions, but was impartially at the disposal of all those who could pay for its use.

It should not, however, be supposed that caste had vanished. Even in the cities, desperate attempts were made by the orthodox caste people to scrupulously observe rules of eating as prescribed by caste. It was the historical tendency towards an increasing breakdown of these practices that has been pointed out above.

Impact of New Legal System

The British government, by introducing a uniform system of law in the country, dealt a severe blow to the social and legal inequalities rampant in the Hindu society in the pre-British period. Formerly, caste status determined the punishment for an offence. The Hindu state and the caste and village committees dealt out varying punishment for the same offence to delinquents of different castes. Equality before law, irrespective of caste, was now established.

The expropriation of the caste committees of all penal powers by the British government deprived caste of a powerful physical weapon to stampede its recalcitrant members into submission. Castes became only voluntary associations which commanded no sanction of law when they inflicted on their members fines or such other punishment for infringement of caste rules. This considerably weakened the power of caste.

Such legislation as the Caste Disabilities Removal Act of 1850, the Special Marriage Act of 1872 and Special Marriage Amendment Act of 1923 contributed to undermine the edifice of caste.

Impact of New Social Formations

The new economic system brought about a new grouping of the population in the economic sphere. Caste groupings based on former functional divisions no longer corresponded to new functional divisions. The Indian people became differentiated into such categories as capitalists, workers, peasant proprietors, merchants, tenants, land labourers, doctors, lawyers, technicians, each category being composed of individuals belonging to various castes and communities but having identical material and political interests. This horizontal division on new class lines increasingly weakened the old vertical caste lines. Thus there came into existence such organizations as Millowners' Associations, All-India Trade Union Congress, All-India Kishan Sabha, Landlords' Unions. These groups struggled for their own interests. In the process of these struggles they developed a new consciousness and outlook and a new solidarity, which slowly weakened the caste consciousness of their members. The class organizations and united class actions of these class groups steadily educated the Indian people into new class outlooks and habits. To that extent, they were steadily undermining the caste.

Impact of Class Struggles

In strike struggles, not only the workers belonging to the upper castes but even those belonging to the untouchable community fought unitedly for the common purpose of increasing the wage and improving working conditions. Similarly, the capitalists, no matter Brahmin, Vaishya or Chamar, united together to defend their interests against the workers. In fact, the class unity embraced even the members of Muslim or Christian communities, who were of the same class. The historical tendency was towards the strengthening of the class tie and weakening of the caste bond, since the class was based on the contemporary economic reality, on the new economic division of society, on the identical material interests of the members of a class.

A class was further based on the national economy. Caste, in pre-British India, when it had a vocational basis, rested on the local town or village economy. There were no common material interests of all farmers or artisans constituting the castes of farmers and artisans on an all-India scale since those farmers and artisans were split up into local groups in a multitude of autarchic villages and towns. Local groups of farmers or artisans had only local interests and were therefore locally united,[10] in contrast to the subsequent unity of different classes such as farmers, workers, merchants, or millowners on an all-India basis.

Differences of vocations brought about differences in income and resultant divergences of standard of life. These also engendered differences in psychological habits, outlooks, and aspirations. Anti-caste urges began to grow. It was only due to the old psychological habits, inertia, and lack of moral courage, that anti-caste moods did not lead to large scale practical revolt against caste on the part of its members.

Impact of Modern Education

The role of modern education in weakening the regard for caste should not be underestimated. In pre-British India, whatever education was there, was under the monopolistic guidance of the Brahmin caste and was saturated through and through with religion. Since the caste system was sanctified by the sanction of the Hindu religion, this education, saturated with the religious spirit of Hinduism, trained the people in accepting the caste system and built up a caste conscience in the individual. The individual accepted caste as divinely ordained and considered infringement of caste rules as sacrilege. One of the tasks of the pre-British education was to inoculate in the individual reverence for the caste scheme of the Hindu society and make him a willing and enthusiastic adherent of the claims of caste.

The British government secularized education. It made it accessible to anyone, irrespective of caste or community, who could pay for it. In spite of its distortions and limitations, this education remained liberal in content. It propagated principles such as the equality of men before law, equal rights of all citizens of the state, equal freedom to follow any vocation. It was based on European Liberalism. It popularized such ideas as those of representative institutions, the freedom of association or assembly. It is true that the British rule was the rule of an alien people over the Indian nation and, therefore, an undemocratic phenomenon. Still, the education organized by that rule was secular and basically liberal, in contrast to the education in pre-British India which endorsed caste distinctions of the Hindu society and upheld privilege.

A section of the educated class of the Hindu society, who studied the liberal philosophy and democratic institutions of the western countries, became the standard bearer of anti-caste revolt. It was the group of enlightened Indians like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Debendranath Tagore, Keshub Chandra Sen and others, who made the reform of caste one of the fundamental items of their programme.

As education spread to the lower strata of the Hindu society, it kindled libertarian impulses among those age-long victims of the Hindu social system. This gave rise to such anti-caste movements as the movement of the depressed classes under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar, himself springing from the submerged strata, the Self Respect Movement in South India, and others.

Impact of Political Movements

The growth of the nationalist movement played a great role in weakening caste consciousness. In India, the presence of the foreign rule was a permanent stimulus to the Indian people to unite on a national basis. In proportion that the national struggle against the British rule increased in scope and intensity, the narrow local, provincial, caste, and communal consciousness also weakened. Such political organizations as the Liberal Federation, the Indian National Congress, and others, however different their programmes, strategic principles, and methods of struggle might have been, were not based on caste or community. They appealed to all Indians to become their members irrespective of caste or creed. Also the political structure they visualized for India did not admit of any caste privilege.

The role of the political movements such as the N.C.O. Movement of 1921-2, the C.D. Movement of 1930-3, and others, in strengthening national consciousness among the Indian people was tremendous. Themselves the expression of national consciousness whatever their programmes and techniques of struggle, these movements further deepened and extended national consciousness among the people.

Thus the growth of the national movement undermined, to some extent, the caste consciousness of the Hindus.

In fact, both class and national movements contributed to weaken the caste consciousness of the Indian people

Caste System, Its Reactionary Significance

The caste system became an obstacle both to the development of the contemporary economy established during the British rule in India as also to the national unity so vital to win national freedom. For the growth of industry, it was necessary to have plenty of labour supply. The rigid rule of caste forcing its every member to follow the hereditary occupation came in the way of the plentiful labour supply for industry. The caste, demanding the foremost allegiance to itself, came also in the way of the paramount need of the subject people to subordinate every allegiance to the supreme allegiance to nationalism. The ruination of artisans and impoverishment of farmers made it economically necessary for them to take to other vocations. The spread of democratic ideas such as individual liberty kindled urges to revolt against caste distinctions and inequalities among the educated Indians. Anti-caste movements were born out of this ferment and slowly gathered strength, though the main pillar of caste, endogamy, remained invulnerable.

The caste system was one of the root causes which obstructed social reform in other fields of social life also. 'On our side of the country, I mean in Gujerat, the greatest hindrance to all social reforms is the caste.'[11]

It was the educated section of the Indian people who launched the attack on caste. It sensed the anomaly of caste in new India. For national freedom and advance, political, social, economic, and cultural, the caste structure had to be reformed, or even eliminated. The individual's liberty had to be recognized, his initiative freed from the stifling constraint of caste. This alone could guarantee the unfoldment of all creative energies of the individuals composing the nation. National progress demanded the emancipation of the individual from the shackles of caste. Social justice had to be fulfilled by destroying all caste privileges and disabilities.

The conforming to caste rules was demanded in the name of the individual's salvation after death. The social reformers propagated national progress as the objective of man.

Movements Against Caste System

The social reformers attacked the very basic ideas of the medieval social system. 'These ideas may be briefly set forth as isolation, submission to outward force or power more than the voice of the inward conscience, perception of fictitious differences between men and men, due to heredity and birth

. . . a general indifference to secular wellbeing, almost bordering on fatalism. These have been the root ideas of our ancient social system. They have, as their natural result, led to the existing family arrangements, where the woman is entirely subordinated to the man and the lower castes to the higher castes, to the length of depriving men of their natural respect for humanity.'[12]

The social reformers attacked inequality and separatism and stood for equality (in a Liberal bourgeois sense) and cooperation. They attacked heredity as the basis of distinctions, and the law of Karma which supplied the religio-philosophic defence of the undemocratic authoritarian caste institution. They called on the people to work for betterment in the real world in which they lived rather than strive for salvation after death. They branded the caste system as a powerful obstacle to the growth of national unity and solidarity.[13]

There were different angles from which caste was attacked by different social reform groups. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, invoked the authority of Mahanirvana Tantra, an old religio-sociological work of Hinduism, to support his view that caste should no longer continue. The Brahmo Samaj opposed the rigid social divisions which caste implied, thus: 'When will those pernicious distinctions which are sapping the very life blood of our nation be at an end, and India rise as a strong, united nation fit to fulfil the high destiny which Providence has ordained for her? There cannot be a surer truth than this that high destiny cannot be fulfilled without the utter destruction of the supreme root of all our social evils, the caste system.'[14]

Debendranath Tagore and Keshub Chandra Sen, who succeeded the Raja as successive leaders of the Samaj, were more critical of the Hindu scriptures than the Raja. It was Keshub Chandra Sen who, in most unambiguous categorical terms, repudiated the caste system without invoking any scriptural authority. The spirit of social revolt which the Raja inaugurated reached a climax in the history of the Brahmo Samaj under the guidance of Keshub Chandra Sen.

The pioneering work of the anti-caste movement first started by the Brahmo Samaj was continued by other organizations which were subsequently formed in the country. The Bombay Prarthana Samaj carried on the propaganda of the repudiation of caste practically on the same lines as the Brahmo Samaj. Both the Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj, under the out and out democratic cultural influences of the west, denounced the caste as an institution itself. In contrast to this attitude, the Arya Samaj started by Swami Dayanand preached not the repudiation of the caste system but the revival of the Hindu society of the Vedic period based only on four castes. The Arya Samaj, while crusading against the minute dissection of the Hindu society into countless subcastes, aimed at reconstructing it on the original fourfold division. Further, it stood for extending the right to study scriptures even to the lowest caste, the Shudras.

Thus while both the Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj were iconoclastic movements with regard to caste, the Arya Samaj stood for reforming caste by eliminating all subcastes.

In addition to the Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, and the Arya Samaj, there were other movements which also carried on a campaign against caste. Telang, Ranade, Phoolay who founded the Satya Shodhak Samaj in 1873, Malabari, Poet Narmad, and others were strenuous crusaders against the caste system. In the south, the Self Respect Movement, attacking the humiliating disabilities from which the non-Brahmin communities suffered, was organized.

One of the arguments advanced by the Left leaders of the Indian national movement was that since the reactionary social institutions rested on the low economic evolution of the Indian society and since the low economic evolution was due to the absence of political power in the hands of the Indian people, national freedom was the prime condition for the social reconstruction of the Indian society. The destruction of caste was thus bound up with the problem of national independence. 'The social and cultural backwardness is the expression and consequence of the low economic level and political subjection and not *vice versa*. . . . The root problem is economical-political.'[15]

Convinced that a radical reforming of the Indian society was possible only if the Indian people got self-government, they struggled with greater energy and spirit for Swaraj.

Though Indian nationalism reached the conclusion that political power was a vital premise for a fundamental [illegible] truction of the Indian society on a democratic basis, it did not relax its campaign against social evils. However, social reform was given auxiliary place in the scheme of its work.

Movements Perpetuating Caste System

The British government was almost universally criticized for not taking active steps to weaken caste. Some British historians, journalists, and professors, sometimes even recommended the keeping alive of caste division as a lever to safeguard the British domination. 'It may be doubted if the existence of caste is on the whole unfavourable to the permanence of our rule. It may even be considered favourable to it, provided we act with prudence and forbearance. Its spirit is opposed to national union' remarked James Kerr.[16]

There were other minor causes also which kept alive the consciousness of caste. Mr. Middleton, one of the two Superintendents of Census Operations of 1921, made significant remarks about the effects of the British administration on caste in the Punjab. He observed:

> 'I had intended pointing out that there is a very wide revolt against the classification of occupational castes; that these castes have been largely manufactured and always entirely preserved as separate castes by the British government. Our land records and official documents have added iron bonds to the old rigidity of caste. . . .' 'We pigeon-holed every one by caste and if we could not find a true caste for them, labelled them with the name of an hereditary occupation. We deplore the caste system and its effects on social and economic problems, but we are largely responsible for the system we deplore. Left to themselves such castes as Sonar and Lohar would rapidly disappear. . . . Government's passion for labels and pigeon-holes has led to a crystallization of the caste system.'[17]

The growth and intensification of the national movement and the class struggle between the employers and the workers as well as the zemindars and the tenants drove a section of the wealthy classes to support the caste system as the weapon to sabotage the growing national unity of the people and the class unity of the workers and the peasants belonging to the different castes or communities. As the workers and the peasants or the tenants, no matter what castes they individually belonged to, came to recognize their common economic and political interests, they felt increasingly more as members of a class rather than of a caste, united in their class organizations such as trade unions, kisan sabhas, tenants' organizations, land labourers' unions, and formed even their class parties such as the socialist and the communist parties. They organized joint struggles to secure from employers or zemindars better working and living conditions. Naturally this was not relished by the latter. The most reactionary among them even used the reactionary institution of caste to disrupt the growing unity of the masses.

> 'The classification of the Hindu population by castes at each successive census is objected on the ground that it perpetuates distinctions which should be obliterated. On the other hand, the caste system has its apologists, who stress its merits as the cement of society, which holds Hinduism together and enables it to withstand attacks from without. It is, remarked the Maharajadhiraj of Darbhanga, "the best and surest safeguard against the spirit of unrest, against the growing bitterness between the classes and the masses, between capital and labour, which is constantly menacing civilization".'[18]

Caste charity and mutual aid organizations on a caste basis were also factors in retarding the process of the dissolution of the caste. Animated by the emotion of caste solidarity and perturbed at the centrifugal tendencies developing within the caste, the conscious members of a caste organized societies to help its members in a variety of ways. Poor members of the caste were given financial help. Buildings were constructed to be rented only to the members of the caste and at cheap rents. Scholarships were awarded for carrying on studies only to the boys and the girls belonging to that caste. Co-operatives were started for the exclusive benefit of the members of the caste.

This strengthened caste consciousness and caste allegiance and played an anti-national and anti-progressive role. Formerly, a caste group was an integral part of the town guild or the village community. In the absence of appreciable economic exchange or transport facilities, it had very little contact with other groups of the same caste inhabiting other villages and towns. Henceforth due to the travelling facilities provided by railways and buses, a caste organized itself on a national scale. It held caste conferences, maintained caste executives to supervise over its members scattered throughout the country. It published magazines and newspapers carrying on propaganda of caste solidarity. All this only contributed and strengthened caste consciousness, consolidated the caste on a national scale and conserved it.

With the growing weakening of the economic basis of caste, common economic interests of its members tended to decline. The caste, composed of the members following identical vocations and with common material interests and outlook, became increasingly a fiction. It became only an impediment to the people being marshalled into real divisions of the new society.

Dual Aspects of Lower Castes' Movements

The movements of the lower castes of the Hindu society suffering from social, religious, and legal disabilities, as a result of the undemocratic caste system, had two aspects; one a progressive and the other reactionary and anti-national. When a lower caste organized even on a caste basis and fought for democratic freedoms, its struggle helped the general struggle for the unity of the Indian people on a democratic basis. Communalism throve on privilege on one side and disabilities on the other. When democratic liberties were won and all social and legal inequalities based on the hierarchic structure of society were abolished, communalism itself would vanish. There would survive no distinctions between the members of one community and those of the other. It would be the democratic merging of all individuals, only to be subsequently classified into social groupings based on their real role in the existing socio-economic structure and therefore historically valid. Communalism would end only when the democratic freedoms were extended to the unprivileged social groups.

But when a lower caste organize itself for securing a specific weight in the constitution of the country, when it demanded separate electorates, it acted in a reactionary and anti-national manner. Separate electorates would only perpetuate communalism. It would make permanent the communal division of society. Lower castes would be right in demanding the removal of special obstacles put in their way for the manifestation and development of their talent as a result of hierarchic structures of society. This would be a progressive democratic demand and would help to increase the creative vitality of a people. But if a caste asked for special rights, it acted in an undemocratic and anti-national way. The members of a submerged caste and only common negative interests inasmuch as they were interested in the removal of disabilities imposed on all of them. But when, due to the establishment of a new economic system, the vocational basis of every caste was disorganized, when every caste was composed of individuals pursuing different vocations and having even conflicting material interests, there could be no common positive interests of all its members.

Similarly, a non-Brahmin bloc of castes had no common positive interests. These castes were composed of artisans, land labourers, landlords, factory workers, tenants, and others. The interests of these groups were widely divergent. Within the same caste of this bloc, too, often there were groups pursuing different occupations. The non-Brahmin movement was valid and progressive only so far as it struggled to remove legal and social disabilities. Special representation aiming at serving common positive interests had no meaning, since there were no common positive interests of the different castes comprising the non-Brahmin bloc, nay, even of all individuals composing one of its castes. In fact, the positive interests, economic and political, of non-Brahmin millowners would be served by joining the millowners' association, an aggregate of millowners belonging to all castes and communities. Similarly, the interests of non-Brahmin workers would be served of workers who belonged to all castes and communities.

Special representation only perpetuated communal divisions just as the democratic movement of the non-Brahmins for social, legal, and religious equality paved the way for the dissolution of communal divisions. 'Reserved representation is thus not necessary. Nay, it is harmful in so far as it tends to perpetuate the distinction based on birth. In countries where the nation-community is strongly built up on the basis of the feeling of unity, no such principle is recognized for the representations of the different interests, even when they can be parcelled out into groups with conflicting interests. To harp on the caste differences and to allow special representations is to set at naught the fundamental condition for the rise of community feeling.'[19]

The role of the nationalist movement in weakening the caste bond should not be underestimated. It is true that the basic pillar of caste, viz. endogamy practically remained intact, but increased collaboration of members of different castes in economic, political, and secular-cultural movements, steadily grew. The national movement which already secured a mass basis affected the narrow caste bonds. Again, the national movement was essentially democratic in principle and based its programmes on equal rights of individuals and groups. As such, it was objectively and indirectly in irreconcilable conflict with the hierarchically graded caste, conserving inequalities based on birth. The national movement unified the people while caste kept them divided. The national movement proclaimed the principles of individual freedom and self-determination as much as national freedom and national self-determination. So, the growth of the national movement weakened caste.

> 'The advancing forces of the Indian people are leading the fight against caste, against illiteracy, against the degradation of the untouchables, against all that holds the people backward. While learned lectures are being delivered on the antique Hindu civilization and its unchanging characteristics, the Indian national movement, enjoying the unquestioned support of the overwhelming majority of the people, has inscribed on its banner a complete democratic programme of universal equal citizenship, without distinction of caste, creed or sex, abolition of all special privileges or titles, universal adult suffrage and universal free compulsory education, state neutrality in relation to religion, and freedom of speech, press, conscience, assembly and organisation, far in advance of the semi-democracy of Britain.'[20]

Both Indian and world events of great magnitude had an effect on the mind of the Indian people. They served as a powerful ferment creating urges among the Indian people to break through old institutions and customs. This process gathered momentum since the war of 1914-18.

> 'Eighteen years after the Armistice we feel that India can never again return to her old stable equilibrium unaffected by world forces. . . . The conservatism of the British Raj favoured time-honoured abuses. The innovating spirit of democracy, acting through parties competing for votes, and strong arms to back voting power, is apt to make short work of ancient privileges supported by neither reason, strength, nor courage. The champions of caste privilege are already in retreat, and the

retreat looks like becoming a rout. . . . If untouchability is doomed, can caste distinction survive? . . . No doubt the strength of Hinduism is neither in the legislatures nor in the temples, but in the home. Yet it is just in the home that the modernizing spirit is at work through the education of women. The Hindu joint family, the chief bulwark of caste, is being undermined by the education of women, and the facilities for travel and contact with the outer world.'[21]

Future Trend

To sum up. The combined action of the various objective and subjective factors, mentioned before, considerably affected the caste system. The occupational basis of caste was seriously disorganized. New parallel political, economic, and cultural organizations sprang up which were the mustering centres of members belonging to different castes but having identical interests. These organizations and new forms of consciousness which were growing, slowly diminished the importance of caste organizations and weakened caste-consciousness itself.

Caste privileges practically vanished in the legal sphere. In the social sphere, they survived because of custom and force of inertia among the people. Caste rules regarding eating with others were frequently abrogated and in cities were considerably relaxed in practice.

Endogamy, the formidable pillar which sustained the caste structure, however, remained almost unshaken. Inter-caste marriages were still exceptions.

The tendency, however, had been towards the progressive dissolution of caste. With the further economic development, spread of education, and growth of national and class movements for political freedom and progress, the process of the dissolution of caste was bound to be accelerated even at a geometrical rate. In society as in Nature, advance or decline does not occur at a uniform rate. Accumulating anti-caste consciousness of the people was sure to burst into large-scale practical anti-caste actions even in the matter of marriage. With the disappearance of endogamy, its last formidable pillar, the edifice of caste would collapse.

References

1 Buch, p. 23.
2 Shelvankar, p. 20.
3 Ghurye, p. 2.
4 Ibid., p. 3.
5 Refer Risley, p. 298.
6 O'Malley, pp. 374–5.
7 Ghurye, p. 27.
8 O'Malley, p. 310.
9 Ibid., p. 310.
10 Mathai, p. 65.
11 Lady Vidya Gauri Nilkanth quoted by Ghurye, p. 161.
12 Indian Social Reform, Part II, p. 91.
13 Refer Buch.
14 Philosophy of Brahmaism, p. 330
15 R. P. Dutt, p. 60.
16 Quoted by Ghurye, p. 164.
17 Quoted by Ghurye, p. 160.
18 O'Malley, p. 373.
19 Ghurye, p. 169.
20 R. P. Dutt, p. 500.
21 *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, December 1936.

CHAPTER XV

CRUSADE AGAINST UNTOUCHABILITY

Untouchability, Inhuman Institution of Hindu Society

THE SOCIAL organization of the Hindus inherited from the pre-British period had many oppressive and undemocratic features. The segregation of a section of the Hindus as untouchables, who were precluded from such elementary rights as the right of entry to public temples or of the use of public wells and tanks, and the physical touch of whom contaminated a member of the higher castes, constituted a most inhuman form of social oppression.

The untouchables were the outcastes of the Hindu society. Though belonging to the Hindu society, they were its proscribed part.

Historically, untouchability was the social fruit of the Aryan conquest of India. In the process of social interaction, a portion of the indigenous conquered population was incorporated into the Aryan fold. The most backward and despised section of this incorporated population, it appears, constituted the hereditary caste of untouchables.

For centuries, untouchability persisted in the Hindu society. Even extensive and profound humanitarian and religious reform movements such as started by Buddha, Ramanuja, Ramanand, Chaitanya, Kabir, Nanak, Tukaram and others, hardly affected the inhuman and age long institution of untouchability. Hallowed with tradition and sanctified by religion, it continued to exist in all its barbarous vigour for centuries.

History has known hierarchically graded societies of various types in different epochs and among different peoples. All these societies were based on social privileges and inequalities.

However, no hierarchically graded society can compare with the Hindu society in its extreme gradation of ranks and inequalities of rights. Hardly any society condemned its section to physical segregation as the Hindu society did in the case of its untouchables.[1] The mere physical touch of an untouchable was a sin, an abomination.

In the Hindu society, the hereditary untouchables were assigned such low functions as those of scavengers, of removers of dead cattle, and others.[2] They were, socially and legally, debarred from any other profession. The Hindu state enacted draconic laws to punish those untouchables who rebelled against their intolerable conditions. They had no right to study or enter a temple. They had to reside in a separate area in the village or town and had no freedom to use public wells and tanks which the caste Hindus used.[3] An untouchable was punished for a crime, by the law of the Hindu state or the village tribunal composed of the caste Hindus, more drastically than a caste Hindu who committed the same crime.

This social oppression of the untouchables had religious sanction. As such, it was more firmly entrenched.

Thus, under no institution was man so deeply humiliated and crushed as under that of untouchability. The outraging of human personality and human dignity reached its high watermark under it.

It was but natural that the elimination of such an atrocious social phenomenon as untouchability became one of the main planks of the platform of all social reform movements in India.

Though different motives and considerations prompted various groups of social reformers in their campaign against untouchability, all recognized it as an institution to be destroyed. It is true that a good proportion of the Hindu community, its numerically strong orthodox section, tenaciously opposed the abolition of untouchability and general disabilities from which these depressed masses of the Hindu society suffered. However, the tendency was towards its increasing elimination.

Depressed Classes, Their Strength

The census report of 1931 estimated the number of the depressed classes at 50,192,000 in the whole of India. In the U.P., they constituted 23 per cent of the total population.[4]

Thus, these socially submerged classes formed about one-fifth of the whole Hindu population. The problem of their emancipation, therefore, assumed vital importance in any scheme of national freedom and social reconstruction of India.

Among the depressed classes themselves, there were social gradations. There were socially superior and socially inferior groups among these victims of social injustice themselves. This made the problem further complicated and difficult.

Again, the extent of untouchability and other disabilities varied from place to place.

In spite of this, the depressed classes were demarcated from the upper caste Hindus by certain fundamental social oppressions and disabilities common to them.[5]

The removal of untouchability and all disabilities from which the depressed classes suffered, formed an important item in the programmes of all socio-reform and religio-reform movements that sprang up in India during the British rule.

Movements to Ameliorate Their Conditions

Indignation at such an inhuman and unjust institution was a part of the general democratic indignation which developed among the conscious and educated section of the Indian people.

The Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Social Reform Conference, even political organizations like the Indian National Congress led by Gandhi, and the All-India Harijan Sangh, a non-political body founded by Gandhi, strove by propaganda, education, and practical measures, to restore equal social, religious, and cultural rights to the untouchables.

There was a stirring among the depressed classes themselves. The spread of education among them brought forth a group of intellectuals such as Dr. Ambedkar, who became the spokesman of their sufferings and disabilities and passionate fighter for their elementary human rights. The All-India Depressed Classes Association and the All-India Depressed Classes Federation were the principal organizations of these classes. The latter was founded and led by Dr. Ambedkar. In addition, there were numerous local and sectional organizations of the various castes comprising the depressed classes.

By various and different methods and to a varying extent, all these organizations were striving for the removal of the disabilities of the depressed classes. The most spectacular among these disabilities were non-admission to temples and public schools, the ban on the use of public wells, and residential segregation. Dr. Ambedkar, in addition, tried to transform the depressed classes into a political army and pressed their political claims which were conceded in the Constitution of 1935 in the form of special representation of these classes. Though the demand of the depressed classes for special representation was anti-national and disruptive of national unity, still it mirrored the political awakening among these classes.

The Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj, and other religious reform movements of the Hindus had for their aim a consolidation of the Hindu society on a reconstructed, rational basis. Their leaders strove in the direction of the democratization of the Hindu social system. They stood against gross social injustices from which the depressed Hindus were suffering and generally preached their abolition in the very name of the Hindu Shastras by reinterpreting them.

The non-religious social reform movements condemned untouchability and other social injustices in the name of individual liberty and equality of human rights without trying to secure any favourable verdict of the Vedas on their side.

Liberals and left politicians in the Indian nationalist movement like Gokhale, Gandhi, and others, argued also that since their demand for self-government or independence from the British rule was a democratic demand, the Indians should also practise democracy in the social sphere and reconstruct social relations between individuals, castes, and communities on the basis of democratic principles, the principles of equal liberty and rights of man.

Further, national freedom was a function of national unity and united national strength. National unity and strength demaded equal rights and equal freedom of self-development. The abolition of untouchability, the removal of disabilities of the millions of depressed classes, would have contributed to the development both of national unity and vitality.

Even those Hindus who, like Savarkar, stood for the Hindu Raj, advocated the elevation of the status of the depressed classes. This was due to the fact that they felt alarmed at the numerical loss which the Hindu community had been experiencing due to the steady conversion of the untouchables to Islam and Christianity which guaranteed them more social equality.

Thus a movement to elevate the depressed classes, to improve their miserable economic conditions, to spread education among them, to extend to them the freedom to use public wells, schools, and roads, and enter public temples, also to secure for them special political representation, steadily grew in the country and gathered momentum. The Mahad Satyagraha for the right of water led by Dr. Ambedkar was one of the outstanding struggles of the untouchables to win equal social rights.

It was a slow process however. The depressed classes formed the most poverty-stricken strata of the Indian society. Literacy among them was also on a very low level.

Gandhi, the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh founded by him in 1932 and other bodies, were doing extensive work of social reform and educational character for the depressed classes. The Sangh started numerous schools for the Harijans including residential vocational schools. In addition, scavengers' unions, cooperative credit societies, and housing societies, were formed.[6]

The Congress governments, which functioned for a few years in various provinces, from the year 1937, did useful work for the elevation of the depressed classes. The Congress government of Bombay passed the Bombay Harijan Temple Worship (Removal of Disabilities) Act permiting the trustees, if they wished, to admit the Harijans to the temples, even if the current custom or the instrument of trust debarred them. Free education for the Harijans, from the primary class of the University degree, was introduced in their provinces by the C.P. and Bihar Congress governments. In other Congress-governed provinces, similar facilities were arranged.

A number of Satyagraha movements of the Harijans also took place wherein they disobeyed the ban on their temple entry, and strove to enter the temples. Those movements, reinforced by growing popular sympathy for their democratic demands, secured for the untouchables the right to temple entry in a number of places.

The rulers of states like Travancore, Indore, Aundh, and Devas, themselves took the initiative in opening all state temples by proclamation.

"Neutrality" Policy of Britain, Its Criticism

The Indian nationalists stated that the British government did not energetically and enthusiastically work for the restoration of the rights of the depressed classes and that it did not exercise its power to strike at the undemocratic denial of elementary human rights to the untouchables. Even Dr. Ambedkar, who was not irreconcilably hostile to the British government, while addressing the untouchables, remarked:

> 'Before the British, you were in a loathsome condition due to your Untouchability. What has the British Government done to remove your Untouchability? Before the British, you could not draw water from the village wells. Has the British Government secured you the right to the wells? Before the British, you could not enter the temple. Can you enter there now? Before the British you were denied entry into the Police Force. Does the British Government admit you to the Force?'[7]

Dr. Ambedkar considered that unless the Indian people secured political power and that power did not concentrate in the hands of the socially suppressed section of the Indian society, it was not possible to completely wipe out all social, legal and cultural disabilities, from which that section suffered. He said:

> 'Nobody can remove your grievances as well as you can and you cannot remove these unless you get political power into your hands. . . . We must have a government in which men in power will not be afraid to amend the social and economic code of life which the dictates of justice and expediency so urgently call for. This role the British Government will never be able to play. It is only a government which is of the people, for the people and by the people, in other words, it is only the Swaraj Government that will make it possible.'[8]

This was a strong stricture on the 'neutrality' policy of the British government in India in social and religious matters which ojectively tended to perpetuate reactionary and oppressive social customs and institutions. It was true that Hindu orthodoxy resented and resisted all progressive social measures but, the leaders of Indian nationalism and depressed classes argued that the British government ought not to have evaded its state duty to stamp out social inequalities and injustices. It was true that the British government had intervened in social matters and introduced reforms like the abolition of suttee, equality before law of all citizens, touchables or untouchables alike, and others. Still, the rate at which the reforms were accomplished was too slow and exhibited too much concern of the government about the feelings of the reactionary social forces.

Progressive Englishmen like H. N. Brailsford also levelled a similar criticism at the British government regarding its attitude to the old reactionary and effete social institutions and practices persisting in India. In his *Subject India*, Brailsford remarked:

> 'None the less, our official policy was then, as now, to interfere, as little as possible with Indian institutions: it tolerated social customs injurious to health, notably child marriage, and accepted even untouchability as an immutable fact in an environment it dared not alter. Our courts, as time went on, took to administering Hindu law with an almost antiquarian fidelity. The result of this attitude was unquestionably to stereotype the past in a land that never has discarded it with ease.'[9]

The democratic awakening of the depressed classes, their increasing consciousness of their basic human rights, was a part of the general national democratic awakening which had taken place among the Indian people during the British rule. During that period, a new economic and political system was established all over India. This system was based on the principle that all individuals of society were equal units having equal individual liberty and treatment before law. It dealt a heavy blow to the ideas of heredity and status on which the pre-capitalist medieval Indian society was based. An individual had equal right and freedom to follow what vocation he liked. He was treated on the whole on par with other fellow-citizens before law. This had kindled among the socially submerged classes the urge to break through all shackles imposed on their freedom for centuries. The humanitarian activity of the members of the upper castes reinforcing the rebellious struggles of the submerged sections, constituted the socio-reform movement in India.

Impact of New Economic Forces

There were a number of objective factors which often imperceptibly led to the diminishing of the gulf of social inequalities and distinctions. The introduction of railways and buses increasingly brought both touchables and untouchables physically together. Modern industries established in India impartially recruited their labour supply in the labour market both from touchables and untouchables, who further worked at the machines in physical proximity to one another. In labour strikes, both touchable and untouchable workers fought together and slowly and steadily developed a new class consciousness which increasingly began to supplant caste consciousness. In cities, the restaurants proved powerful solvents of the caste prejudices. How little did the proprietors of those restaurants know that they were engaged in the practical campaign of liquidating caste inequalities and caste distinctions!

Impact of Modern Education

With the spread of education among the depressed classes, more and more members from them took to vocations which were formerly the monopoly of the upper castes. Common material interests were forged among the followers of the same vocations and, in course of time, when the first prejudices were overcome, they came together and co-operated, irrespective of whether they belonged to the superior or depressed classes, to advance their common interests.

With the introduction of modern education, the Indians came in contact with the libertarian and democratic ideologies of the west. This produced a recoil among the best individuals of the higher castes from the social injustices and gross caste inequalities obtaining in the Hindu society. It also produced a rebellious attitude among the educated members of the depressed classes who organized these classes for smashing the chains of social oppression imposed on them.

The lack of education among the untouchables was one of the factors which restricted them to low occupations. This bred immense economic and cultural poverty among them. In proportion they received more and more education, liberal and technical, not only did their economic conditions improve but also different sections following different occupations began to merge, on class basis, with groups of other castes following similar occupations. Thus new bonds based not on caste but common occupation and class began to be forged. This slowly began to dissolve the mass of the untouchables into social groups such as factory workers, teachers, clerks, merchants, mechanics, or manufacturers. New economic bonds between the touchables and the untouchables following the same economic activity started weakening the prejudice of untouchability. The tendency was visible in the industrial centres, where, due to the common occupation and united struggle against employers to press common material interests such as wage increase, trade union rights and others, solidarity slowly started growing between touchable and untouchable workers. Slowly but steadily, the new class feeling began to supplant the old caste prejudices.

Also when an untouchable was educated and improved his economic position, the attitude of the higher castes towards him also began to be modified.

Untouchability had basically economic foundations. With the occupational homogeneity of the untouchables dissolved and with their material and cultural position elevated, they would dissolve into different groups resting on the modern economic structure. This would undermine untouchability seriously.

Impact of Nationalist Movement

There was another factor which operated in favour of the anti-untouchability movement. It was the expanding nationalist movement which aimed at integrating all Indians irrespective of caste or community to achieve political freedom. The success of the Swaraj struggle demanded the democratic alliance of all castes and communities in India whose vital interests lay in the political independence of the country. Such a union was primarily forged in joint struggles of these groups for the accomplishment of political freedom. Thus the nationalist movement contributed, though slowly, towards the dissolution of old distinctions. On the other hand, the social reform movement aiming at eliminating social injustices such as untouchability, in its turn, contributed towards the building of the national unity of the Indian people on a democratic basis.

The social reformers were thus moved both by humanitarian and national considerations when they crusaded against purely social evils.

The untouchables were the most poverty-stricken section of the Indian people. They were mostly land labourers, semi-serfs, or engaged in the worst occupations. They suffered from twofold evils, economic and social, which were interconnected. Their low social position accentuated their economic exploitation and their miserable economic conditions tended to stabilize their low social status.

Prerequisites of Abolishing Untouchability

The problem of the abolition of untouchability was, therefore, bound up with that of a basic socio-economic reconstruction of the Indian society, with that of the creation of a prosperous national economy, the change in the existing economic and social relations which would elevate the material conditions of the people including the untouchables, the expansion of education, and the enactment of positive legislation which would, regardless of the opposition of orthodox opinion, sweep away all disabilities that were imposed on them. Purely, the socio-reform movement had a limited productivity only. It generally could not go to the economic roots of the social evil. As such, it usually yielded partial and unstable results.

The anti-untouchability movement, which came into existence and which subsequently gathered momentum, was the expression of the growth of larger national and human consciousness among the Indian people. It was an essential part of the national and democratic movement of the Indian people.

References

1 Ghurye, p. 142.
2 Rameshwari Nehru, p. 4.
3 ibid., p. 3.
4 ibid., p. 2.
5 Refer Ambedkar, (2) and (3).
6 Refer *Report of the Survey of the Conditions of Harijans in Allahabad; Report of Harijan Survey Committee* 1933-4, *Cawnpore, Report on the Conditions of Harijans, Delhi.*
7 Quoted in *Report of the Delegation sent to India by the India League in* 1932, p. 136.
8 ibid., p. 137.
9 Brailsford, pp. 17-18.

CHAPTER XVI

MOVEMENT FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

Woman, her low position in pre-British India

THE GENERAL national and democratic awakening that took place in India as a consequence of the emergence of the new economic environment, the establishment of the new political system, and the spread of modern western education and ideologies among the people, found expression in the movement for the liberation of the Indian women from the medieval forms of social subordination and suppression from which they suffered for countless centuries.

In the pre-British Indian society, except perhaps in the early periods of the Vedic times, woman was assigned a position subordinate to man. Law and religion did not recognize the equality and equal rights of man and woman. Society permitted man to have rights and freedoms from which woman was excluded. Different standards were adopted to judge the individual and social conduct of man and woman.

As in all medieval and ancient societies barring the prehistoric tribal society, woman in India was held in subjection to man before the British conquest inaugurated a new economic and legal system in India and brought her in contact with the modern democratic influences of the occidental countries.

It is true that in the past, religio-reform movements like Buddhism tried even partially to elevate the status of the Indian women but it was only during the British period that big movements were organized to destroy the social and legal injustices from which they suffered for centuries.

It is true that Indian history recorded instances of outstanding women like Gargi, Chandbibi, Nurjahan, Razya Begum, the Queen of Jhansi, Mirabai and Ahalyabai, who accomplished great feats in the spheres of literature, art, philosophy, administration, and even warfare. But these women sprang from the governing privileged strata of society and were, therefore, free from conditions of social subjection in which the Indian women, in the mass, lived and who had, therefore, neither freedom nor opportunity for the development of self-expression.

New Economic Forces, their Impact on her Status

The British conquest of India transformed the social setting in India. It released objective and subjective forces which kindled democratic urges among the people.

The social reform movement, which arose out of the new conditions of social existence, set itself the task of removing the social and legal injustices and inequalities from which the Indian women suffered.

The subjection of the Indian women in the pre-British period was rooted in the social and economic structure of the society of the period. Birth determined the status of an individual in that society. The disabilities of a woman arose from the fact that she was born a woman. This inferior status of woman in society was further made sacrosanct by religious ordinances.

The capitalist economy which the British conquest inaugurated in India and the legal and political regime established in the country, were based on the principles of the recognition of individual equality and contractual freedom of the individual. It did not admit, on principle, all inequalities based on birth, sex distinction, caste, or community.

It is true that the struggle had to be organized to get this principle realized progressively in different spheres of life. The hesitation of the British government as well as the reactionary resistance of the orthodox sections of society, had to be combated before legislation was enacted such as would increasingly make woman man's equal in matters of civic rights.

Movements to elevate their Status

Though they were the enlightened individuals of the male section who launched initial efforts to abolish laws and customs which suppressed womanhood, in course of time, the victims of those injustices bestirred themselves and organized the movement for their emancipation under their own leadership. They built up their women's organizations and created a platform for agitation for the redress of their disabilities. Among the organizations which worked for the social, political, and educational advance of the Indian women, the All-India Women's Conference founded in 1926 stood in the forefront.

The removal of the disabilities of the Indian women and their freedom from various forms of oppression was a long process. Orthodox India and old social and psychological habits were arrayed against it. However, the movement scored important successes and daily gathered more and more strength.

There were rampant such barbarous customs in the past as suttee and infanticide from which the Indian women suffered. The widow had to throw her living body on the pyre with the corpse of her husband when he died. Parents killed girl babies for the marriage of a girl was too expensive for poor parents.

Even when the custom of suttee was abolished, widows were prohibited from remarrying.

There were also such evils as purdah and temple prostitution.

Not only the Mahomedans but even sections of the Hindus maintained the purdah, a most pernicious institution. 'There the woman lay, condemned to a lifelong prison, her naturally keen senses dulled through inaction, without light of knowledge illumining her vision, steeped in ignorance and prejudice, groping in the dark, a martyr to the conventions of the society in which she had been born.'[1]

Social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy strove, by propaganda, to put an end to the practice of suttee and finally it was abolished by Lord Bentinck. Infanticide was also subsequently declared a crime.

With the spread of education and liberal and rational ideas among the people, the practice of purdah began to diminish.

Examples were set by such aristocratic ladies as Their Highnesses the Begums of Bohpal. The detrimental effects of purdah on the body and mind as well as on social progress were expressed by the leaders of the women's movement. 'If women are to take their part in the raising of the tone of social life, if they are to understand the duties and responsibilities for which their sons must be trained, the purdah must go.'[2]

Child marriage had been one of the principal evils from which the Indian women, more even than men, suffered. Due to the efforts of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, the Act of 1860 was passed raising the age of consent for married and unmarried girls to ten. It was also due to the efforts of the same social reformer that, in 1856, the remarriage of widows was legally permitted.

However, it was only in 1929 that a decisive legal step was taken to strike a blow at the harmful custom of child marriage. The Child Marriage Restraint Act passed in that year raised the marriage age for girls to fourteen and for boys to eighteen.

The right of widows to remarriage was zealously advocated by such ardent social reformers as Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar in Bengal, and Mr. Malabari, Poet Narmad, Justice Ranade, and K. Natarajan in Bombay. Though all social reform groups made widow-remarriage a prominent item in their programme, the movement did not much advance due to the deep antagonism of the people to the idea of a widow remarrying. Old psychological habit-patterns persisted although the legal obstacle had been removed.

The institution of temple prostitution which new India had inherited from the past was analogous to a similar institution in the ancient Greece. Devadasis formed 'an hereditary caste of women' who consecrated themselves in early childhood to temple service. 'They lately numbered over two hundred thousand in Madras, and though their skill in dancing and singing . . . may have done something to keep alive those arts, the fact that the devadasis were known to be prostitutes, actually degraded the arts they practised and made them distasteful to respectable women.'[3]

As a result of the strenuous agitation of Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi and other reformers, an Act was passed in 1925 'which extended to them (devadasis) sections of the Penal Code which made traffic in minors a criminal offence.'

Struggles for Right to Education

In pre-British India, barring a few exceptions, the mass of women were not given education. The medieval conception assigned to women only domestic duties. There were village and town schools for boys but women were not provided with education.

The destruction of the old society and the emergence of the new, after the British conquest of India, was paralleled by the growth of a new outlook among the Indian people. Authoritarian conceptions were increasingly replaced by libertarian conceptions. All individuals should have equal rights and freedoms irrespective of sex, caste, race, or creed. The hundred and fifty years of the British rule were years of effort on the part of the progressive section of the Indian people to realize that democratic principle in politics, religion, education, and the social sphere. It was in the name of this principle that Swaraj was demanded, abolition of caste distinctions and inequalities was advocated, monopoly rights of hereditary priesthood in the sphere of religion were attacked, as also equal rights of men and women in economic, political, social, and educational fields, were proclaimed.

The movement for the progressive realization of the democratic principle of equal rights of men in all spheres of social-existence were an attack not only on the foreign rule but also on much of the undemocratic legacy of pre-British India. It was an attack upon the subordination of the individual to caste laws and taboos, the exclusion of women from rights enjoyed by men, and others.

Equal right of women to education and culture was recognized almost universally. Education spread, rapidly and more and more, among women. The conservative recoil from education of girls began to disappear. 'There was a time when the education of girls had not only no supporters, but open enemies in India. Female education has by now gone through all the stages—total apathy, ridicule, criticism, and acceptance. It may now be safely stated that anywhere in India, the need for the education of girls as much as of boys is recognized as a cardinal need, the *sine qua non* of national progress.'[4]

The pioneering work of women's education was done by such religio-reform bodies as the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya

Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Danish, American, German, and British Missionary Societies and also by the small but progressive Parsi community. The Indian Women's University started by Professor Karve in 1916 was one of the outstanding institutions imparting education to women.

Among the Muslims, the spread of education among women was slow though Sir Saiyad Ahmad Khan and other leaders advocated it as far back as the end of the last century. The tendency, however, was towards a steady increase.

The steady growth of women's education was reflected in the fact that the number of girls attending schools rose from 1,230,000 in 1917 to 2,890,000 in 1937.

Widespread poverty of the majority of the Indian population was one of the fundamental obstacles to the rapid growth of women's education. Due to their poverty, the labouring strata of the Indian people, the workers and primarily the peasants, were unable to take advantage of the educational facilities where they existed. Education did not percolate to those layers because of their inability to pay for it. The Indian nationalists attributed the poverty of the Indian masses to the political handicap of the foreign rule on India's economic development such as would assure proper economic standards for the Indian masses. The problem of the universal spread of education among the Indian people was bound up with that of their political freedom and resultant economic advance.

Women's participation in Politics

One of the most amazing events of contemporary Indian history was the rapid entry of the Indian women into politics, especially after 1919. In pre-British India, barring a few women of the royal and aristocratic families such as Sultana Razya Begum, Chandbibi, Nurjahan, Ahalyabai Holkar, the women in the mass did not participate in politics. Things changed during the British period. They not only enthusiastically exercised the limited suffrage granted to them but even participated in mass movements of the type started by the Indian National Congress. 'At the very moment when Congress and Mahatma Gandhi were calling on them for a national effort, they recognized that the prophet and the paramount power had each placed a valuable weapon within their reach With one hand they grasped passive resistance and with the other the vote.'[5]

This was unique in the entire history of India, the spectacle of hundreds of women taking part in political mass movement, picketing of liquor shops, marching in demonstrations, courting jails, facing lathi charges and bullets.

At one stroke, the Indian women broke through their age-long restrictions. From docile domestic servants to their husbands and other male folk, they rose to the level of citizens, voting political programmes and participating in big political movements. Some of them like Sarojini Naidu, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, and Vijayalaxmi Pandit, even became leaders of international repute.

A number of Indian women worked as Ministers, Under-Secretaries, and Deputy Speakers of Provincial Legislatures, when Congress governments were formed in 1936. The Indian women also became members of local boards and municipalities.

A great awakening thus took place among the Indian women. It is true that, due to immense poverty, the opportunity of education and participating in civic life were restricted to women belonging to the upper and middle layers of society. Nevertheless, it was a new and astounding development not known to the old pre-British India.

Their Participation in Class Struggles

Even the women of the lower strata, in spite of the handicap of illiteracy and poverty, were steadily growing conscious of their rights. Thousands of women of the working class and peasantry took part in strike struggles, street demonstrations, and conferences. They were also developing political consciousness, became members of national political organizations as also of trade unions and Kisan Sabhas which had for their objective not only a free India but even a free socialist India.

This awakening of the Indian women was the manifestation of the growth of national sentiment and democratic urges for national and individual liberty among them.

References

1 Ray, p. 116.
2 H. H. The Maharani of Baroda at the All-India Women's Educational Conference, 1927, quoted by O'Malley, p. 450.
3 O'Malley, p. 453.
4 The Rani of Sangli at the All-India Women's Conference, 1927, quoted by O'Malley, p. 450.
5 O'Malley, p. 475.

CHAPTER XVII

RELIGIOUS REFORM MOVEMENTS AMONG HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

Religious Reform Movement, Expression of National Awakening

THE NATIONAL democratic awakening of the Indian people found expression also in the religious sphere. The contradiction between the old religious outlook, practices, and organization, on the one hand, and the new social and economic reality on the other, gave rise to various religio-reform movements in the country. These movements represented attempts to revise the old religion in the spirit of the new principles of nationalism and democracy which were the conditions for the development of the new society.

The spirit of nationalism was needed to unite the people into a joint effort to solve problems which had become national due to the political and economic unification of the Indian people, for the first time in their history, under the British rule. To advance the economic and cultural evolution of the Indian society, now become a single whole, as also to combat restrictions which the British rule put on this evolution, constituted the principal task set to itself by the rising Indian nationalism. It is true that the early pioneers of Indian nationalism, the early social and religious reformers, had hopes of getting these restrictions removed under the guidance of British Democracy. Still, they did recognize that the British rule, in spite of its early progressive character, handicapped the Indian national development.

Democracy was another principle which the reformers, the early pioneer nationalists like Ram Mohan Roy, Debendra Nath Tagore, Keshubchandra Sen, Telang, Ranade, Fulley, and the founders of the Arya Samaj, in varying degrees extended to the sphere of religion. Modern society established in India by the British conquest was a capitalist society resting on the principles of individual liberty, freedom of competition, contract, and freedom of the individual to own and manipulate property at will. Individualism was its key-note in contrast to the pre-capitalist society which was authoritarian in character, maintained social distinctions based on birth and sex, and subordinated the individual to caste and the joint family system. The new society demanded, as the very condition of its development, the abolition of privileges based on birth or sex.

The early religious reformers strove to extend the principle of individual liberty to the sphere of religion.

In fact, these religio-reform movements, the Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Arya Samaj, and others, were in different degrees endeavours to recast the old religion into a new form suited to meet the needs of the new society. It is true that some of their leaders (especially of the Arya Samaj) had the misconception that they were reviving the old pristine social structure of the Vedic Aryans, that they were returning to the Golden Age. In reality they were engaged, in varying degrees, in adapting the Hindu religion to the social, political, economic, and cultural needs of the contemporary Indian nation. History records instances where the consolidators of new societies were imagining that they were returning to the past and reviving the best social forms existing in the old periods. In fact, the early religio-reform movements in India were attempting to build a religious outlook which would build up national unity of all communities, the Hindus, the Muslims, the Parsis, and the rest, for solving such common national tasks as the economic development of India on modern lines, the removal of restrictions put on the people's free evolution, the establishment of equality between man and woman, the abolition of caste, the abolition of the Brahmin as the monopolist of classical culture and sole intermediary between God and the individual. Nevertheless, like the leaders of the European Protestant and other movements comprising the Religious Reformation, the Indian religious reformers were not rehabilitating any past period of society but only consolidating the rising new society.

Liberalism is the philosophy of rising capitalism.[1] Its two main principles are nationalism and democracy. The religio-reform movements were attempts to extend the principles of liberalism to religion.

"Appeal to Past", Its Real Significance

There is a profound psycho-philosophical reason behind the illusion which misled some of these reformers (the Arya Samaj) into thinking that they were returning to the pristine past while in reality they were forging a new society unknown to all past history.

This illusion is the product of the contradiction between the old 'conscious formulations' or thinking and the new conditions of social being.

'Man himself is composed like society, of current active being and inherited conscious formulations. . . . Thus he feels, right in the heart of him, this tension between being and thinking, between new being and old thought. . . . The incomplete future is dragging at him but because instinctive components of the psyche are the oldest, he often feels this to be the past dragging at him. That is why we come upon the paradox that the hero appeals to the past, and urges man to bring it into being again, in doing so produces the future. The return to the classics dominated the bourgeois Renaissance. Rome influenced Napoleon and the Revolution. The return to the natural uncorrupted man was the ideal of eighteenth-century revolutionists. Yet it is the new whose tension men feel in their minds and hearts at such times. . . .

' . . . He may think it is the past he is born to save or re-establish on earth and only when it is done is it seen that the future has come into being. The reformer "returning" to primitive Christianity brings bourgeois Protestantism into being. . . .'[2]

Similarly, Gandhi imagined that he was engaged in an effort to reproduce Ram Raj of the Golden Age of the Hindus while, in reality, he was attempting to evolve a modern democratic capitalist national state existence for India.

The urge to orient towards the past was further accentuated due to the status of the Indian people as a subject nation. Along with a healthy desire for national freedom from the foreign rule, chauvinist dreams of a 'spiritual conquest' of the world through a resurrected Hinduism were sometimes conceived (e.g. Vivekanand, the outstanding leader of the Ramakrishna Mission Movement). The claims of the special 'spiritual genius' of India were proclaimed.

The early religio-reform movements were, however, progressive movements. They were the expression of the first national awakening of the Indian people.

Such religio-reform movements aiming at the remodelling of the old religion to suit the new social needs have usually sprung up in the history of every people during the transition from medievalism to modern capitalism.

Medievalism Vs. Liberalism

Medievalism stood for the rule of the aristocracy. Liberalism, the philosophy of capitalism, preached democracy and government by the people. Medievalism including medieval religion stood for privilege based on birth. Liberalism attacked all such privilege as unjust and proclaimed the principles of individual liberty, equal rights, and free competition. Medievalism demanded faith from the people in the divine origin of kingship, in the sacrosanct character of the social structure, and in the God-ordained nature of whatever exists. Liberalism substituted critical reason for faith. Every institution and principle must be subjected to the test of reason.

Medievalism propagated the theory of fall (from the halcyonic Golden to the present 'degenerate' Kali Yuga). Liberalism basing itself on the scientific history of mankind propounded passionately the doctrine of progress, from barbarism to slavery, from slavery to feudalism, and thence to modern capitalism. Medievalism, on the whole, instigated man to take a pessimistic view of life and concentrate his attention on the other world. Liberalism intensified man's appetite to live up pointing out the unlimited scope to make pleasure-bringing material things in this world by means of modern machinery and science.[3]

The old religion was based on the low level of economic and cultural development of the old society. It had to be remodelled to meet the needs of the new society. It had to be revised in the spirit of the principles of nationalism, democracy, an optimistic and positive attitude to life, and even rationalist philosophy.

On the whole, national progress became the main objective of these reconstructed religions. When religion itself was not repudiated or reformed, nationalism became identified with religion (e.g. the religion of Nationalism as propounded by B. C. Pal, Aurobindo Ghose, and others).

Sometimes old gods and goddesses were interpreted in a way suitable for rousing national sentiment and hopes among the people. 'This interpretation of the old images of gods and goddesses has imparted a new meaning to the current ceremonialism of the country, and multitudes, while worshipping either Jagat Dhatri or Kali or Durga, accost them with devotion . . . with the inspiring cry of "Bande Mataram". All these are the popular objects of worship of the Indian Hindus. .. And the transfiguration of these symbols is at once the cause and the evidence of the depth and strength of the present movement. This wonderful transfiguration of the old gods and goddesses is carrying the message of new nationalism to the women and masses of the country.'[4]

Thus the religio-revival movement, too, like the religio-reform movement, was inspired with a national ideal.

Religio-reform Movement, Its All-embracing Scope

Another characteristic of the religio-reform movements was that their programme was not restricted to the task of merely reforming religion but extended to that of the reconstruction of social institutions and social relations. This was due to the fact that in India religion and social structure were organically interwoven. Caste hierarchy, sex inequality, untouchability, and social taboos, flourished because of the sanction of religion. Social reform, consequently, constituted a part of the platform of all religio-reform movements. While rationalizing religion to a greater or less degree, these movements also aimed at rationalizing social institutions and relations to a greater or less degree. Nowhere in the world did religion dominate and determine the life of the individual as in India. His economic activity, his social life, his marriage, birth, and death, his physical movements, all were strictly and minutely controlled by religion. It was indispensable for the religio-reform movements to have an all-embracing programme of religious, social, and even political reform. They fought the caste system and the ban on going to a foreign country as much as polytheism and idolatry. They attacked caste privilege as much as the monopoly rights of the Brahmin in the sphere of religion. They attacked all this because they were obstacles to national progress which required, as its vital pre-condition, national unity based on the principles of equality and liberty of individuals and groups.

The motif of these movements was national advance. The first national awakening of the Indian people took predominantly a religious form. This awakening deepened and broadened in subsequent decades and found increasingly secular forms.

Similar Developments in Europe

In Europe, too, a similar development occurred. Before national movements aiming at establishing national state and society came into existence, incipient nationalism took religious forms such as Protestantism and Reformation.

This is because medieval religion was not suited to the new society which was growing. Medieval religion, in Europe (the Universal Roman Church), while uniting Christendom culturally, supported the feudal economic and state system which was an obstacle to the national economic unification of the people of a country on the basis of nationally extending exchange relations of the growing capitalist economy. Further, the Roman Church, by supporting the feudal state, was preventing the establishment of the national state which was necessary for the free and rapid development of the new capitalist economy.

The national awakening of the European peoples therefore first found expression in religious struggles against the feudal religion. In France, Voltaire, Rousseau, Helvetius, Holbach, and others, led this initial revolt against the Roman Church, the spiritual support of the feudal economic and state system. This anti-religious revolt preceded the secular national political revolt against the feudal regime.[5]

In India, the first national awakening expressed itself in the form of a series of religio-reform movements. Some of these movements aimed at revising the traditional religion in the spirit of the principles of Liberalism. Others aimed at restoring it in the pure form in which it existed in ancient times.

> The multiform world of Hinduism was stirred and awakened to a spiritual revolution in the nineteenth century much as Europe had been in the sixteenth. . . . Like the Reformation, they reverted to the earliest traditions and attacked the degeneration and superstitution of later days.'[6]

In India, the religio-reform movements launched a crusade against medieval religion which sanctified such institutions as caste which were a powerful obstacle to the national unity of the Indian people and to the development of the new economy in the country. They attacked polytheism, the practice of meaningless soul-deadening religious rites, and religious dogmas which undermined the critical intellectual power of the people. These religio-reform movements were national in content but religious in form. It was in the later stages of our national existence, that nationalism found exclusively or predominantly secular forms.

A brief reference may be made to the principal among these religio-reform movements to illustrate how they embodied the rising upsurge of nationalism and adopted programmes which were, in varying degrees, attempts to apply Liberalism to religion.

Brahmo Samaj Movement

The Brahmo Samaj, established in 1828 by Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833), who can be correctly described as the Father of Indian Nationalism, was the first movement of this kind. The Raja was essentially a democrat and a humanist. In his religio-philosophical and social outlook, he was deeply influenced by the monotheism and anti-idolatry of Islam, Deism of Sufism, the ethical teachings of Christianity and the liberal and rationalist doctrines of the west. 'He tried to interpret and assimilate into himself the highest elements of Islam, Christianity, and modern Rationalism or Humanism, and transformed them into a single creed which he found in the ancient Upanishadic philosophy of his own community.'[7]

He attacked the polytheistic degeneration of ancient Hindu monotheism. He attacked the idol worship of the Hindus as degrading and expounded the conception of 'One God of all religions and humanity'.

His attack on polytheism and idolatry was motivated by national and social-ethical considerations as much as by philosophical conviction. 'My constant reflections on the . . . injurious rites introduced by the peculiar practice of Hindu idolatry which more than any pagan-worship destroys the texture of society, together with compassion for my countrymen, have compelled me to use every possible effort to enable them to contemplate . . . the unity and omnipresence of Nature's God.'[8]

Raja Ram Mohan Roy stood for a rational approach to religion. The individual should study the scriptures directly, without the priest as the intermediary, and assess the rational character of a religious doctrine. He must subject religious principles to the test of his own ethical reason and reject those which contradict the test.

Since the Hindu society was dominated and governed by religious conceptions of Hinduism, no religio-reform movement could avoid a socio-reform section in its programme. According to Raja Ram Mohan Roy and early religious reformers, religious renovation was the vital condition for revising the social structure from a decadent to a healthy basis. That is why the socio-reform programme became a part of the total programme of religio-reform movements.

The Brahmo Samaj, under the leadership of the Raja, launched an offensive against the caste system branding it as undemocratic, inhuman, and anti-national. It crusaded against suttee and child marriage. It stood for the freedom of the widow to remarry and equal rights of man and woman.

The Brahmo Samaj valued the modern western culture and organized educational institutions in the country for its spread among the people. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was an admirer of the liberal democratic culture of the west.

The Raja considered the British rule in India as a good thing. He admired it for inaugurating progressive measures of social reform such as the abolition of suttee and infanticide, for establishing modern educational institutions and a free press, and others. This was natural since the British rule in India, during the first half of the nineteenth century, had.

historically speaking, a progressive aspect.

> 'In the earlier period of British rule, in the first half of the sixteenth century, the British rulers—in the midst of, and actually through all the misery and industrial devastation—were performing an actively progressive role, were in many spheres actively combating the conservative and feudal forces of Indian society. . . . This was the period of courageous reforms, of such measures as the abolition of suttee (carried out with the wholehearted co-operation of the progressive elements of Indian society), the abolition of slavery (a more formal measure in practice), the war on infanticide and thuggism, the introduction of western education and the freeing of the press. Rigid in their outlook, unsympathetic to all that was backward in Indian traditions, convinced that the nineteenth century bourgeois and Christian conception was the norm for humanity, these early administrators nevertheless carried on a powerful work of innovation representing the spirit of the early ascendant bourgeoisie of the period; and the best of them like Sir Henry Lawrence, won the respect and affection of those with whom they had to deal. . . . The deepest enemies of the British were the old reactionary rulers who saw in them their supplanters. The most progressive elements in Indian society, at that time, represented by Ram Mohan Roy and the reform movement of the Brahmo Samaj, looked with unconcealed admiration to the British as the champions of progress, gave unhesitating support to their reforms, and saw in them the vanguard of a new civilization.'[9]

In spite of his great admiration for the British, Raja Ram Mohan Roy organized a protest movement against the measure to restrict the freedom of the press. He also criticized the British government for excluding the Indians from higher posts.

Since the Brahmo Samaj was not merely a religious movement but also included in its programme items of social and political reform, it was the precursor of the subsequent social reform movement started by Ranade and others and the political reform movement initiated by the early Indian National Congress. The religious reform movement thus prepared for purely secular social and political reform movements in the country. That is the historical significance of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the Brahmo Samaj he started. 'Raja Ram Mohan Roy inaugurated the Modern Age in India.'[10]

Debendra Nath Tagore (1817-1905) who succeeded as the leader of the Brahmo Samaj developed scepticism about the infallibility of the scriptures and finally repudiated it. He substituted intuition for the authority of the scriptures. By means of intuition he located sections of Upanishads which served as the religio-ideological basis of the doctrines and programmes of the Brahmo Samaj.

Keshub Chandra Sen (1838-84) was the next leader of the Brahmo Samaj. Under him, the doctrine of the Brahmo Samaj was more and more adapted to the doctrine of pure Christianity. In later stages, he propounded the doctrine of Adesha, according to which God inspires knowledge in some individuals whose word must therefore be considered infallible and true. A section of Brahmos did not accept this doctrine, left the Samaj and started the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj.

The Brahmo Samaj was the pioneer of the nationalist movement, which, by the workings of history, began as a religio-reform movement aiming at liberating the individual from the deadweight of an authoritarian religion which strangulated their initiative and stultified both the individual and collective mind.

The Brahmo Samaj inaugurated a new era for the Indian people by proclaiming the principles of individual freedom, national unity, solidarity and collaboration, and the democratization of all social institutions and social relations. It was the first organized expression of their national awakening.

Prarthana Samaj

The Prarthana Samaj was founded in 1867 in Bombay by M. G. Ranade. It had a programme of religious and social reforms on the same lines as those of the Brahmo Samaj. Its founder Ranade was one of the leaders of the Indian National Congress and the Indian Social Conference which held their first sessions in 1885 and 1888 respectively.

Arya Samaj

The Arya Samaj founded in Bombay in 1875 by Dayanand Saraswati, though embodying the first upsurge of Indian nationalism, was a movement of quite a different type. It had a more revivalist character. It declared the Vedas infallible and, further, an inexhaustible reservoir of all knowledge, past, present, and future. One must know how to understand

and interpret the Vedas, which contain all information, philosophical, technical, and scientific. By making adequate endeavour, one can discover in the Vedas all modern chemistry, engineering, and even military and non-military sciences.[11]

Since the Vedas were proclaimed infallible, the word of the Vedas and not the judgement of the individual was the final criterion. The Arya Samaj, by postulating the infallibility of the Vedas, did not and could not permit the individual judgement to override the divine text. Thus the Arya Samaj, while freeing the individual from the tyranny and tutelage of the Brahmin, demanded of him implicit faith in the divine Vedas. The authority of the Vedas was maintained instead of the freedom of the individual judgement.

The repudiation of the authority of the Brahmin, the denouncing of the infinite number of meaningless rites and the worship of the images of different gods and goddesses which split the people into numerous belligerent sects, and the crusade against the mass of religious superstitions which kept, for many centuries, the Hindu mind in a state of mental befogging and spiritual degradation,—these were the progressive elements in the programme of the Arya Samaj. Its slogan 'Back to Vedas' was inspired with the urge to bring about national unity and to kindle national pride and consciousness. However, since it retained its narrow Hindu basis, the national unity it proclaimed could not gather into its fold the non-Hindu communities such as the Mahomedans and the Christians. It became a semi-rationalized form of Hinduism.

The Arya Samaj had a programme of social reform also. Though opposed to the hereditary caste system, it stood, however, for the four-caste division of society to be determined by merit and not by birth. Since the Vedas laid down such a division and since the Vedas could not err, the Arya Samaj could not proclaim the death of the caste system itself.

The Arya Samaj stood for equal rights of man and woman in social and educational matters. This was a distinct democratic conception. It, however, opposed co-education since in the Vedic period co-education did not exist.

The Arya Samaj organised a network of schools and colleges, in the country, both for boys and girls, where education was imparted in the mother-tongue. The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic college was founded in 1886 The conservative section of the Arya Samaj thought the education imparted in this college to be not sufficiently Vedic in character. Its members led by Munshi Ram, therefore, started Gurukul at Haradwar, where the education, both in content and method, was given in the ancient Vedic manner.

In all its activities, the Arya Samaj was generally inspired with the spirit of nationalism and democracy. It attempted to integrate the Hindus by destroying the sub-castes. It spread education among the people, proclaimed the principle of equality irrespective of the distinctions of caste, creed, community, race, or sex. It tried to destroy their inferiority complex, the inevitable product of their status as a subject nation.

The Arya Samaj, in spite of its narrow Hindu basis, of its rational declaration that all knowledge is enshrined in the Vedas, drew to itself hundreds of nationalist Indians. In fact, once, the Arya Samaj was one of the main targets of political repression. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that when Sir Valentine Chirol visited India on behalf of *The Times* to investigate the causes of unrest after 1907, he looked upon the Arya Samaj as a serious menace to England and sovereignty.'[12]

The Arya Samaj represented a form of the national awakening of the Indian people. Restricted to a narrow Hindu basis and with a negative attitude to Islam, it, in course of time, led the Muslims to mobilize on a corresponding communal basis. It played a progressive role in the earlier stages when the national awakening was just sprouting. The Arya Samaj had two aspects, one progressive, the other reactionary. When it attacked religious superstitions and the sacerdotal dictatorship of the Brahmin, when it denounced polytheism, and when further it adopted the programme of mass education, of the elimination of sub-castes, of the equality of man and woman, it played a progressive role. But when it declared the Vedas infallible and a treasure house of all knowledge of the cosmos, past, present, and future, when it stood for the division of society into four castes though based on merit, it was playing an anti-progressive role. No knowledge could ever be final in the infinite and eternally evolving social and natural world. So the Vedas could not be the embodiment of all knowledge. Further, all knowledge is historically conditioned and is limited by the level of social and economic development of the epoch in which it is born. As such, subsequent generations have to critically carry over all inherited past knowledge and subject it to the test of reason and social usefulness. Here comes the role of individual judgement. Once the Vedas were eulogized as infallible, the individual as well as the generation he belonged to, were denied the right to exercise their own independent judgement and pronounce upon the ancient scriptures. This was intellectual enslavement of the individual and the generation to the scriptures. It was a departure from the principles of Liberalism.

Again, the Arya Samaj could not be a national or cosmopolitan religion since it demanded of its followers the recognition of the principle of the infallibility and the omniscience of the Vedas.

However, as mentioned above, the Arya Samaj played a progressive role in the earlier stages of Indian nationalism. However, when the national awakening broadened and deepened, when the national movement reached greater and greater secular heights, it became a hindrance to the growth of Indian nationalism by contributing, though unconsciously, to the creation of a belligerent religio-communal atmosphere.

Ramakrishna Mission Movement

The national awakening of the Indian people found expression in the movement inspired by Ramakrishna, a great Hindu saint, in direct line to such saints as Chandidas and Chaitanya. It primarily based itself on the principle of Devotion or Bhakti. Its principal propagandist was Swami Vivekanand, a disciple of Ramakrishna and an intellectual of a very high calibre who, after the death of the saint, founded the Ramakrishna Mission to propagate his teaching.

The Ramakrishna Mission aimed at protecting India from 'the materialist' influences of western civilization. It idealized Hinduism including its practice of idol worship and polytheism. It aimed at the spiritual conquest of the world for revived Hinduism.[13]

One of the harmful results of the foreign rule in India had been to create a tendency among the Indians to disorient from the modern western culture, a historically higher form of culture than the pre-capitalist culture on which the conscious life of an average Indian was based.

There were other religio-reform movements of smaller magnitude which also expressed the new awakening. Hinduism began to organize itself on a national scale in revivalist or reformist forms. These movements spread to various groups comprising Hindu society.

Thus, the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal Society having for its programme the reforming of the Hindu religion and dissemination of religious and non-religious education among the Hindus was started in 1902. In 1890, Shri Narayan launched the movement of the Tiyas, a community which worshipped demons and formed one of the lowest castes of the Hindu society, with the programme of building of temples and establishing schools for the community.[14]

Theosophy

Theosophy introduced in India by Madame Blavatsky and Henry Steel Olcott in 1879 and mainly popularized by Mrs. Annie Besant was another religio-reform movement started in India under the impact of the new Indian and international conditions. The uniqueness of this movement consisted in the fact that it was inaugurated by a non-Indian who was a great admirer of Hinduism. Theosophy subscribed to the spiritual philosophy of ancient Hinduism and recognized its doctrine of the transmigration of the soul. It preached universal brotherhood of men irrespective of distinctions of caste, creed, race, or sex. It stood for the development of a national spirit among the Indians. 'The needs of India' Mrs. Besant wrote in 1905, 'are, among others, the development of a national spirit, an education founded on Indian ideals and enriched, not dominated, by the thought and culture of the West.'[15]

Theosophy stood for making a comparative study of all oriental religions. However, it considered ancient Hinduism as the most profoundly spiritual religion in the world.

Theosophy, however, failed to strike deep roots in the country.

There were minor religio-reform movements aiming at readjusting Hinduism to the social needs of the contemporary Indian people such as the Deva Samaj and the Radha Swami Satsang. Like their major counterparts, these movements, too, aimed at integrating the Hindus round the original principles of Hinduism, democratizing social relations among them, and firing them with a national emotion. They, too, represented in religious form the new national awakening of the Hindus.

Religious Reforms by Eminent Political Leaders

In addition to these organized national religio-reform and religio-revivalist movements, individuals of outstanding capacity and political pre-eminence, such as Bepin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghose, Tilak, and Gandhi, without organizing any distinct movements, contributed to the work of religious reform. Nationalism in Bengal was, though becoming increasingly secular, for some time religious in character. It was influenced by the Neo-Vedantic movement of Swami Vivekanand. 'Hence the attempt on the part of the Bengalee Nationalists to base the movement for Swaraj on the ancient Upanishadic ideal of the search for the metaphysical Absolute in one's own innermost self. Hence the worship of the Mother—the country symbolized as the Goddess Kali.'[16]

Tilak reinterpreted the Gita and declared Action to be its central teaching. The very kernel of the Gita's philosophy, he said, was missed by the Indian people who had, as a result, sunk into inertia and fatalistic moods. The Indian nation could be roused to dynamic effort only if they recognized this.

Tilak tried to provide nationalism with a dynamic philosophy by drawing from the ancient Hindu religion.

Thus the national movement aiming at national freedom from the British rule and the establishment of an Indian society and state on a democratic basis and on the basis also of the modern economy, became a function of an all-embracing religious movement. Nationalism was expressed in religious terms and clothed in religio-mystical form. Indian nationalism with its further development, however, progressively freed itself from the religious element with which it had been permeated. It became increasingly secular.

Materialism, Its Near-absence in India

One striking peculiarity of the Indian national development was that neither its pioneers nor subsequent leaders evolved or accepted the materialist philosophy. All leaders of Indian nationalism, in the philosophical, political, or cultural field, such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Gokhale, Tilak, Banerjee, B. C. Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh, Lala Lajpat Rai, Rabindranath Tagore, Gandhi, Abul Kalam Azad, Iqbal, Jagdish Chandra Bose, and others, stood for, in different ways and varying degrees, a revision of traditional religions. None of them, however, challenged or repudiated religion or the God-idea on which it is based. None of them subscribed to the philosophy of materialism.

This was in contrast to the period of rising nationalism in Europe. It is true that preponderatingly, almost overwhelmingly, the ideological leaders of European nationalism were idealists (in a philosophical sense) and God-believers. Even such a redoubtable assailant of Christianity as Voltaire was a Deist. However, there was a minority current of materialism in the philosophical movement of the epoch. Some of the French Encyclopaedists such as Holbach and Diderot were materialists. Further, after naional states and societies were established in various European countries, there sprang up a number of philosophers and scientists who propounded the doctrine of materialism. Haeckel, Feurbach, and Marx belonged to this group. In addition to thoroughgoing materialists, Europe of the period of nationalism projected agnostic philosophers like Kant and Herbert Spencer and sceptical thinkers like Hume.[17]

In India, however, the history of the nationalist movement does not record the name of a single outstanding materialist, agnostic, or sceptical philosopher.

This may be due to the fact that Indian nationalism developed in a peculiar way. Modern materialism was an integral though a very small fractional part of the total European culture. Since this culture happened to be the culture of the British who had conquered and dominated India, the nationalist leaders felt a conscious or subconscious recoil from it. In the sphere of philosophy, India must stand on its own legs and must draw from its philosophical legacy from the past which was essentially religio-spiritual. This is, perhaps, one of the principal reasons why these leaders shunned modern materialism and even thoroughgoing rationalism. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, in spite of his rationalist approach, could not overcome his belief in the divinity of the Vedas. His successor, Debendra

Nath Tagore, endeavoured to achieve a synthesis of reason and intuition. Keshab Chandra Sen proclaimed himself as a prophet entrusted with messages from God to be delivered to humanity. Pal and Aurobindo subscribed to the cult of spiritual mysticism. Lajpat Rai, the Arya Samajist, divinized the Vedas. Finally, Gandhi, the greatest leader of Indian Nationalism, invoked 'the inner voice' when he was confronted with a complicated political or social problem.

The presence of the foreign rule, consciously or unconsciously, prompted even a nationalist of high intellectual calibre not only to reject the foreign rule but often also to recoil from the culture of the ruling nation. These were, though incorrectly, identified. The very growth of national consciousness arising out of the conditions of the foreign rule, which, on the whole, checked free national development, often urged the nationalist to invoke even the obscurantist and mystical parts of the nation's past culture and attempt to base the democratic and progressive contemporary national movement on them. This introduced confusion and mysticism in the national movement and obstructed the growth of the national unity of various socio-religious groups. Politics became tainted with religion and was mystified.

Early Religio-reform Movements, Their Progressive Significance

In the initial stages, when Indian nationalism was immature, just sprouting, it found expression in such Liberal religio-reform movements as the Brahmo Samaj. The religious form of the national movement was conditioned by its very immaturity. As such, these religio-reform movements played a historically progressive role, in spite of their limited rational and religious form. They were the first nationalist breaches in the fortress of medievalism and the declaration in religious and social reform language, that the modern Indian nation was born and was growing. Subsequently, when the national consciousness extended and the national movement became strong and even militant, such attempts as were made by the Left nationalists as Pal and Aurobindo to build them on the basis of the religio-mystical philosophy of ancient Hinduism, in a way, hindered their growth. These leaders did deepen and made even militant the national consciousness of a section of the people, but, by associating nationalism with and even basing it on Hindu mysticism they also retarded the extension of its social basis. One of the many reasons why the national movement did not draw within its orbit wide sections of the Mahomedan community, was that even under the leadership of Gandhi, it continued to have a religious tinge. It was surely not the decisive reason but one of the many reasons which could not be ignored. It is true that the nationalist movement headed by the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Gandhi had a programme of the national democratic transformation of India and not of the establishment of any Hindu Raj. It is true that the Indian National Congress was a national organization, a mustering centre of all conscious nationalist forces. But Gandhi's declared conception that politics should be spiritualized, be in line with religio-ethical principles, alienated those who wanted the national movement to remain secular. Further, it introduced a mystical element in political calculations, often distorting the strategy of the movement.

Growth of Rationalism and Materialism

Rationalist and materialist philosophical ideas slowly began to spread in India after 1930. This was due to numerous reasons such as the wider interest of Indian intelligentsia in the political, sociological, and philosophical literature of the west after the war of 1914-18. The crisis of world capitalism and the bold claim of socialism that it was the historical successor of capitalism, made the politically-minded Indian youth study the socialist literature of the west including Marxism which was based on the philosophy of Dialectical Materialism. A section of the Indian intellectuals actually accepted Marxism and its number began to expand. The achievements of the Soviet Union were also helping to win over an increasing number of Indians to Marxist Materialism. Such political groups in India as the Congress Socialists, the Communists, the Royists, the Tagorites, and the Trotskyites, accepted Marxism as their philosophy.

In addition to the Marxist materialist current, there was another current increasingly gaining ground in India, that of

Rationalism. The number of Indian rationalists was also growing.

The pioneers and leaders of nationalism were the educated class and the bourgeoisie. They based themselves on the new capitalist society which, historically a higher type, increasingly replaced the medieval social system in India. They accepted its economic foundations. They desired the free development of that society. Liberalism was the philosophy of rising capitalism. It was a body of principles which guaranteed its growth. And just as capitalism was a higher social system than the pre-capitalist one, Liberalism with its principles of national unification, individual liberty, democracy, equal rights of men, representative institutions, and rationalism, was a higher philosophy than pre-capitalist philosophies which were mostly based on religious obscurantism and defended ranks and privileges based on birth.

Logically, the Indian intelligentsia, the pioneers of Indian nationalism, should have adopted the Liberal philosophy *in toto*. However, since Liberalism originated in the west and since the Indian people were ruled by a western power, they rather remobilized old Hinduism, and either revived it in its ancient pure shape or tried to remodel it in a Liberal spirit to suit the needs of the new Indian society.

National Awakening among Muslims, Reasons for its Slower Growth

The national awakening among the Indian Muslims took place at a slower rate than among the Hindus. There were historical and religious reasons for that.

Though a number of Hindu kingdoms had emerged during the period of the dissolution of the Mogul Empire after Aurangzeb, the Muslims always felt that they comprised the ruling community in India. They were particularly hostile to the British whom they accused of expropriating them of their political power. The British deposed during the Mutiny Shah Alam, the *de jure* if not the *de facto* Emperor of all India. The anti-Muslim policy of the British government after the Mutiny intensified the anti-British feeling of the Muslims.

This made the Muslims avoid any contact with the new culture and education which the British introduced in India. They avoided coming under the influence of that education and stuck with greater tenacity to orthodox Islam.

The impoverishment of the Muslims during the process of the British conquest of India took place at a rapid rate. 'Many of the finer and more skilled industrial arts of India had been in the hands of Muslims, and they were ruined by the fiscal policy of the East India Company. The higher posts in pre-British India, in the army, in the administration, and in the learned professions, had been in Muslim hands. Many of the higher and middle classes were reduced to beggary . . . there is no doubt that the Muslim mind at the beginning of the nineteenth century entertained the deepest distrust of the British, who had destroyed their power, and of western culture, which was in their mind associated with the British.'[18]

The Hindus availed themselves of the new education. They projected an educated class, a section of which assimilated the principles of Liberalism, studied other religions and organized great reform movements. On the other hand, the Muslims disorientated from the new education.

The pioneers of nationalism in all countries were always the modern intelligentsia and the bourgeoisie. Rising capitalism made the intelligentsia and the capitalist class which stood for the development of bourgeois society, the organizers of national movements. It was predominantly from the Hindu community that the first sections of the Indian intelligentsia and the bourgeoisie sprang. They became the pioneers of Indian nationalism.

It was only by the end of the nineteenth century that the Muslims began to take to modern education. Gradually an intelligentsia trained in modern education came into being. A section of that intelligentsia steadily built up a nationalist outlook. Along with this, a commercial and industrial bourgeoisie also began to grow among the Muslim community. Nationalism began to spread among the Muslims.

Another factor which retarded the growth of nationalism among the Indian Muslims was the basic character of Islam. Islam emphasizes more fanatically than any other religion the unity of its followers. It preaches a world fraternity of its followers. It is a cosmopolitan union of the Muslims all over the world. It offers greater resistance to the growth of nationalism which has a limited national territorial basis. It gives rise either to pan-Islamism or Humanism.

When a country is preponderatingly inhabited by the Muslims (Arabia, Turkey) and where capitalist economic development has taken place, the Muslims of that country become nationalists and evolve a national consciousness. While Islam retards, more than any other medieval religion, the growth of nationalism, such international programmes as socialism spread more rapidly among the petty bourgeois and poor sections of the Muslim population.

> 'The writer in her talks found out that the Muslim youth were more inclined to Jawaharlal Nehru, the socialist leader, than to any other in the political field. . . . And it is evident that Socialism has gained ground among the youth and student organizations. . . . The Punjab Socialist Party consists mostly of Muslims and the Frontier Socialist Party consists mostly of Muslims and the Frontier Socialist Party has the largest membership in all India.'[19]
>
> 'I think that the Muslim rank and file has more potentially in it, perhaps because of a certain freedom in social relations, than the Hindu masses, and is likely to go ahead faster in a socialist direction, once it gets moving.'[20]

Islam arose out of the democratic ferment of the common people of Arabia against the privileged strata of society. As such, it has a democratic ring. Islam preaches the principle of social equality. This makes the propaganda of international socialism more successful among the Muslim rank and file.

In spite of this relative inertia of the Muslims, from the point of view of their development on nationalist lines, there sprang up, in course of time, a number of religio-revivalist and even religio-reform movements among them. These movements were, however, not so powerful as their counterparts among the Hindus. Besides, most of them lacked the national note. There were four such main movements started by (1) Shah Abdul Aziz of Delhi, (2) Saiyid Ahmad of Bareli, (3) Shaikh Karamat Ali of Jaunpur and (4) Haji Shariat-ullah of Faridpur.[21]

These four movements were more of a revivalist character

Ahmadiya Movement

The Armadiya Movement founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in 1889 was more or less based on Liberal principles. It described itself as the standard bearer of Mahomedan Renaissance. It based itself, like the Brahmo Samaj, on the principles of a universal religion of all humanity. The founder was greatly influenced by western liberalism, theosophy, and religio-reform movements of the Hindus.

The Ahmadiya Movement opposed Jehad or the sacred war against non-Muslims. It stood for fraternal relations among all peoples.[22]

The movement spread western liberal education among the Indian Muslims. It started a network of schools and colleges for that purpose and published periodicals and books, both in English and vernaculars.

In spite of its liberalism, the Ahmadiya Movement, like Bahaism which flourished in the West Asiatic countries, suffered from mysticism. It, however, represented an attempt on the part of Islam to assimilate the principles of western liberalism.

As mentioned already, due to historical causes, the Muslim community embarked on a career of national democratic progress later than the Hindus. 'The tragedy of the great revolt in 1857-8 marks the death of the old order, and brought political, economic, and cultural disaster to the Indian Muslims. It made their sullenness, their aloofness, their suppressed hatred for the new order more marked than ever. . . . The key to the whole situation was adaptation to the new environment, use of the new forces that had come into play, acceptance of the new instrument of progress that had been created through English education.'[23]

This recoil from the new reality could not last for ever. Soon, the Muslims took to education and created an intelligentsia. They also appeared in the field of commerce and industries. The progressive elements among these new educated Muslims and Muslim merchants and industrialists steadily evolved a national outlook and took to the road of nationalism in politics and democratic reform in social matters.

Aligarh Movement

The first national awakening among the Muslims found expression in a movement which aimed at making the Indian Muslims politically conscious and spreading modern education among them. Saiyad Ahmed Khan was the founder of this movement. He had such able collaborators as the poet Khwaja Altaf Hussain Hali, Maulvi Nazir Ahmad, and Maulvi Shibli Numani.

The liberal social reform and cultural movement founded by Sir Saiyad Ahmed Khan is known as the Aligarh Movement because it was at Aligarh that the Mahomedan Anglo-Oriental College was established by it in 1875. This college developed into the Aligarh University in 1890.

Along with it, an all-India Muslim Educational Conference was also organized.

The Aligarh Movement aimed at spreading the western education among the Muslims without weakening their allegiance to Islam. The religious education reinforced the secular education which was imparted in the educational institutions it started.

The second task it undertook was to introduce social reform in the Muslim society.

The Aligarh Movement aimed at evolving a distinct social and cultural community among the Indian Muslims more or less on modern lines. It condemned polygamy and the social ban on widow-remarriage which, though permitted by Islam, had crept in among some sections of the Muslims who were recent converts from Hinduism.

The Aligarh Movement was based on a liberal interpretation of the Quran. It tried to harmonize Islam with the modern liberal culture.

After the starting of the Aligarh Movement, independent more or less progressive movements sprang up in Bombay, the Punjab, Hyderabad, and other places.

Sir Mahmud Iqbal

Sir Mahmud Iqbal, the poet of world celebrity, played an important role in the history of the Indian Muslims. Though he supported the Liberal movement, he asked the Muslim Liberals to be on guard so that the broad human principle which Islam stood for was not thrown in the background by emphasis on the nation and the race.[24]

Iqbal described the European civilization as inhuman, rapacious, predatory, and decadent. He even quoted such writers as Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Spengler, and Karl Marx holding conflicting views to denounce its different aspects. He passionately attacked the European civilization in poems which are pearls of Persian and Urdu poetry. He was essentially a humanist and considered Islam as a religion of broadest humanism.[25]

In the later phase of his life, however, Iqbal exhibited a reactionary tendency. He opposed democracy as a system and became hostile to the Indian nationalist movement.[26] As W. C. Smith, in his book, *Modern Islam in India*, remarks, 'His opposition to "Westernism" instead of to capitalism . . . left him a prey to anti-liberal reactionaries. . . . And thus has the noblest of visionaries of tomorrow's just and world-wide brotherhood, been turned by it into the champion of the most retrograde . . . sectionalists.'

Other Muslim Reform Movements

In course of time, the movement for the emancipation of the Muslim women and for combating such institutions as purdah, came into existence. Tyabji, an enlightened and progressive Muslim, was the founder of this movement in Bombay. Shaikh Abdul Halil Sharar (1860-96), an outstanding author and journalist, organized a veritable crusade against purdah in the United Provinces.

With the spread of Liberal ideas among the Muslims, the movement to improve the social position of the Muslim women and to abolish customs which were detrimental to them, began to gain strength. Polygamy began to diminish as also child marriage. The All-India Muslim Conference made a special and regular financial provision for advancing the education of the Muslim women.

Individual Muslims and Muslim organizations established an increasing number of educational institutions for the Muslim women all over India. Slowly education began to spread among the Muslim women.

Thus the religio-reform and socio-reform movements grew and gathered momentum among the Muslims also. The rise of Turkish and Arab nationalism and the establishment of a national secular state in Turkey, had the effect of broadening the outlook of the Indian Muslims. Modernized Turkey had the effect of modernizing the mind of an increasing number of the Indian Muslims. The rise and development of the Indian national movement also increasingly brought the Muslims into the orbit of the Indian nationalism. The independent workers' and peasants' movements which developed rapidly in India later on and were mostly led by the communists, the socialists and the Left nationalists like Jawaharlal Nehru, had the effect of making the Muslim masses national-minded and class-conscious. These movements became the training ground for the masses of both communities and spheres of collaboration to serve national and common class tasks. The economic structure and the existing foreign rule urged them to come together and co-operate for common liberation.

Religio-reform Movements, Their Reactionary Role in Subsequent Period

It should be further noted that the religio-reform movements in the earlier phases of Indian nationalism, when it was just growing, was immature and restricted to a small section, were the forms in which the national awakening found expression and even further developed for some time. In the phases, however, when new classes and communities came into existence or developed national, class, or group consciousness, and, further, when the national movement acquired a broader multi-class and multi-communal basis, most of these very religio-reform movements, instead of becoming forms of development and expression of the national consciousness, became fetters on its development. Some of them even became anti-national disruptive forces retarding the process of a united national movement for freedom. The reversal of their role was mainly due to their transformation from national religio-reform movements into religio-communal movements. This became particularly manifest from 1918 onwards. In the conditions of the phenomenal growth of the progressive nationalist and class movements in the country since this year some of the old and other new religio-communal movements which sprang up became camouflaged instruments of sectional vested interests. They weakened the steadily growing national unity of the Indian people, and the economic and political unity of the poor strata of various communities which organized trade union, peasant, and other movements against those vested interests.

Further, the religio-communal movements subserved the British interests. The introduction of such devices as communal representation and electorate objectively thwarted the growth of national unity by perpetuating communal distinctions.

During the recent phase of general capitalist decline admitted by all outstanding economists and politicians, when progressive national and class movements were steadily gathering strength, vested interests, foreign and Indian, found in religious mysticism and communalism useful forces to weaken and confuse these movements to their national advantage.

References

1 Refer Laski and Weisbord.
2 Caudwell, pp. 27-8.
3 Refer Laski.
4 B. C. Pal quoted by Buch (2), p. 184.
5 Refer Tawney, Laski, Hans Kohn, and Weisbord.
6 Kohn, pp. 55-6.
7 Buch, p. 61.
8 Raja Ram Mohan Roy, p. 5.
9 R. P. Dutt, pp. 273-4.
10 Rabindranath Tagore, quoted by Brajendra Nath Seal, p. 95.
11 Refer Max Muller, p. 64.
12 Kohn, pp. 67-8.
13 Refer Vivekanand, pp. 193-5.
14 Refer Kohn, p. 73.
15 Annie Besant quoted by Buch (2), p. 174.
16 Buch (2), p. 182.
17 Refer Laski, Tawney, Langue, Engels, Weisbord.
18 O'Malley, pp. 392-3.
19 Edib, pp. 339-40.
20 Jawaharlal Nehru, p. 577.
21 Refer O'Malley.
22 Refer Kohn, p. 36.
23 O'Malley, p. 398.
24 Refer Sir M. Iqbal, p. 227.
25 Refer O'Malley, p. 406.
26 M. R. Smith, p. 156.

CHAPTER XVIII

RISE OF POLITICAL MOVEMENTS AS THE EXPRESSION OF INDIAN NATIONALISM

Political Nationalism, Outcome of Foreign Domination

The British conquest of India was prompted and its rule motivated naturally by the considerations of the British interests. The state power held by Britain in India was, therefore, basically exercised to safeguard and develop the British interests. This brought Britain into conflict with the Indian people and the various classes and groups composing it in varying degree, since the interests of the latter collided with the British interests. Political nationalism was the outcome of this conflict of intersts and gave birth to various political movements in the country. These movements had for their objective an increasing share in political power and successively Dominion Status, Home Rule and even complete Independence. The political movements embodied the striving of the Indian people and its various sections to secure political power which they could use to serve their respective social, economic and other interests.

The industrial bourgeoisie found in the absolute control of India by Britain an obstacle to carry through its programme of unfettered industrial development. The educated classes found in the monopoly of key posts in the state machinery by the British an obstacle to their just ambition to secure jobs. The sons of the soil, the peasantry, found in the new land and revenue systems introduced by Britain the basic cause of their progressive impoverishment. The proletariat found in the British rule a foreign undemocratic agency preventing it from developing class struggles for improving their conditions of life and labour and finally for ending the wage system itself under which they were exploited.

Further, the Indian people, as a whole, recognized in the British rule an alien rule which barred their normal social, economic and cultural development. They also wanted political power to end such evils as race discrimination, the sacrifice of Indian interests in dominions and colonies such as South Africa, Kenya, Malaya, Ceylon and others. The national sentiment almost spontaneously arises among the people who are ruled by a foreign nation since this rule imposes basic handicaps on the free development of the subject nation.[1]

First Sproutings

Though Indian nationalism as an organized movement developed during the last decades of the nineteenth century, its first sproutings were visible in the beginning of that century. The rise of the Brahmo Samaj in 1828 was a religious expression of the rising national awakening of the advanced Hindu intelligentsia who received the modern education introduced by Britain in India and who came in contact with the western democratic ideologies through that education. Secular political organizations such as the British India Society established in 1843 and the British Indian Association, which resulted out of the amalgamation of the few existing political groups in the country in 1851, also sprang up during this early period.

These early political groups, which embodied the first feeble beginnings of the rise of Indian political nationalism, were composed of a few individuals and lacked a popular basis. They could not also exist on an all-India scale since the whole of India became British territory long after they were formed. Indian nationalism as an organized and all-India movement (though with a narrow social basis) came into existence only in the last decades of the second half of the century when proper historical conditions matured for its birth.

But before tracing the rise and surveying the development of this organized nationalist movement, we will refer to the revolt of 1857 which was the last powerful attempt of the social classes of the old society, which were being politically and economically expropriated as a result of the British conquest, to drive out the British from India and to revert to the pre-British social and political existence.

Revolt of 1857, *Its Causes*

The revolt of 1857 was the result of the accumulated discontent among the various strata of the old Indian society who suffered by the British political conquest, by the new economic forces and measures brought into operation by that conquest, and by the various social innovations introduced in the country by the British government.

It would be a misunderstanding of the revolt of 1857 if it were interpreted as a mere mutiny of the Indian sepoys. It had a far broader social basis. Dr. Duff remarked:

> 'Why, if it had been merely a military mutiny, in the midst of an unsympathetic, unaiding population, a few decisive victories, such as we had, might quash it. . . . And it is a fact that it is not a mere military revolt but a rebellion—a revolution. . . .
>
> 'From the very outset, it has been gradually assuming more and more the character of a rebellion—a rebellion on the part of vast multitudes beyond the Sepoy army, against British supremacy and sovereignty.'[2]

The annexationist policy of the British, especially of Lord Dalhousie, which brought about the liquidation of a number of Indian feudal states, the new land revenue system which reduced, by its heavy pressure, the mass of the Indian peasantry to acute economic misery, as well as the large-scale ruination of millions of Indian artisans and handicraftsmen as a result of the influx of the machine-made goods of the British industries in the Indian market, were the principal causes of the revolt of 1857 which expressed the profound discontent of sections of these social layers.

The expropriated feudal chiefs who mainly led the revolt desired to recover their lost territories. Even the unexpropriated princes felt the menace of expropriation hanging over their head and a number of them joined the revolt.

There was disaffection also among the workers on indigo and other plantations owned by the British, due to their miserable conditions of life and labour under their foreign employers. Sections of them, too, developed anti-British moods.

There were other factors which accentuated the anti-British sentiment among the people. The excessive proselytizing zeal of the European Christian missionary bodies created a suspicion that the British were conspiring to convert all Indians to Christianity. The pundits and maulvis, whose authority and power were diminished as a result of the measures introduced by the British government such as secularization of the legal system, abolition of customs like suttee, and introduction of modern education which generally challenged the views of religion regarding the world and social relations, often deliberately stimulated this suspicion.

Further, in the general atmosphere of distrust and hostility engendered by the violent political subjugation of the country and ruinous economic consequences of the operation of the new economic forces to the life of the people, even progressive measures such as the construction of railways and the establishment of the telegraph system were interpreted as acts of black magic by which the white wizards schemed to tie India in iron chains. These factors deepened the distrust and hostility of the people towards the British government. It was the revolt primarily of forces of the old Indian society threatened with extinction by the British political conquest of India and the new economic forms introduced in the country.

The revolt was suppressed by the British by ruthless methods.[3] There were a number of causes leading to its failure. There was the lack of unity among the insurgents. They lacked a uniform military strategic plan. There was no co-ordination. The revolt was also not universal. There was no effective leadership. There were conflicts of class interests among the ranks of the insurgent groups such as those between the zemindars and feudal princes on the one hand and the cultivating farmers on the other.

> 'The lack of unity in the forces against the British was a factor of which they took full advantage. The native chiefs soon realized that if they joined too closely with the peasants and artisans, the control of the movement would gradually slip out of their hands.'[4]

Further, the British divided the united front of the classes in revolt by definite measures.

> 'The policy of wholesale annexation was discontinued. The peasants were still further subordinated to the landlords, as the British supported

the latter in their demands for compulsory labour. . . . The British also tried to break up the unity of the peasants (1) by granting certain privileges to the larger peasant farmers; and (2) by enacting laws under which peasant lands could be bought and sold.'[5]

Character and Significance of the Revolt

The revolt of 1857 cannot be regarded as national in the full modern sense of the word. Though the sentiment was anti-foreign, there was no positive national content in it. The different sections of the people who had participated did not feel that they were parts of one single nation living a common political and economic existence. The political programme of the feudal leadership of the revolt had a negative significance only—the expulsion of the foreigner. They did not and could no formulate the scheme of a national state for all India or a programme of any reconstruction of Indian society. There was no national consiousness among them. In fact, they were united only in the task of eliminating foreign rule but, in its place, they wanted to re-establish the same disunited feudal India of the pre-British period, at best a confederacy of feudal states under the Delhi Emperor.

> 'The rising of 1857 was in its essential character and dominant leadership the revolt of the old conservative and feudal forces and dethroned potentates for their rights and privileges which they saw in process of destruction. The reactionary character of the rising prevented any wide measure of popular support and doomed it to failure.'[6]

There were noble fighters among the insurgents. They courted the gallows for an ideal. But the ideal was historically a reactionary one, the ideal of a political India, though free from foreign control, split up into a congeries of principalities with a feudal social basis and with a feudal economy.

Though the revolt of 1857 was not motivated by the historically progressive conception of the national unification of the Indian people on a democratic basis, its bold challenge to the British rule had been a source of patriotic inspiration, in subsequent years, to a great majority of the Indian people. It became a symbol of the people's will to throw off the foreign yoke. Its heroic personalities like the Queen of Jhansi were canonized. Some political groups, terrorists and extreme left nationalists, even regarded it as a dress rehearsal for the future successful struggle for freedom. Other political groups, on the other hand, while recognizing it as an inevitable and heroic reaction of a subjugated and exploited people to the foreign rule, pointed out the historically reactionary purpose animating the uprising, especially its feudal leadership.[7]

The revolt of 1857 revealed in action, for the first time in Indian history, that a large-scale alliance between the Hindus and the Muslims against the British rule was possible.[8] It created a tradition for a united nationalist movement of the Indian people.

New Strategy of British Rule

The end of the 'Mutiny' inaugurated a new stage in the history of the relations of India and Britain. Not only did the British Crown assume the direct political control of India but also the policy of the British rule underwent a change.

Till 1857, the aim of the British was to liquidate the native states and convert entire India into a British territory directly governed by the East India Company. In light of the experience of the revolt of 1857, this aim was relinquished in favour of a decision to perpetuate those states which were still unannexed. The new policy of Britain aimed at transforming the rulers of these states into 'allies', so many loyal supporters of the British rule in India.

This was definitely a point of departure in the British political strategy. Till 1857, the British were engaged in destroying the Indian disunity represented by the existence of a multitude of feudal states into which India was split up. It is true that the methods adopted were violent and the political motive, the subjugation of India to her own rule, undemocratic. Still, objectively, Britain was performing thereby the historically progressive task of integrating India into a single political whole.

After 1857, to safeguard her rule, Britain abandoned this policy of the annexation of the native states. She perpetuated these reactionary states and even undertook to defend them against all attacks from within and without. Thus Britain became not a foe of Indian feudalism but its defender, not only from external danger but also from the rising progressive forces within these states.

Thus British capitalism which in its own country overthrew feudalism preserved it in India. These artificially perpetuated feudal states, barring a few, became strongholds of political, social and cultural reaction.[9]

Karl Marx remarked: ' . . . The conditions under which they (the native states) are allowed to retain their apparent independence are, at the same time, the conditions of a permanent decay and of an utter inability of improvement. Organic weakness is the constitutional law of their existence, as of all existences living upon sufferance . . . the native Princes are the strongholds of the present abominable English system and the greatest obstacle to Indian progress. . . .'[10]

Inasmuch as Britain based its rule on reactionary feudalism, the limited progressive role of the British conquest of India was proportionately diminished.

Its Consequences

There was a significant consequence of this new policy in the country. When in course of time, the populations of the native states, living under coercive political, social and economic conditions, became politically conscious and organized struggles against the autocratic princes for representative government and other democratic demands, they also inevitably came in conflict with the British government which was committed to protect these princes. Thus the struggle of the states' people against the princes merged into the struggle of the people in British India for freedom and steadily developed as a united national movement of the entire Indian people against the British government supported by and supporting the princes (excepting in cases of 'gross maladministration').

Not only did the British government keep alive after the Mutiny, for political strategic reasons, the enfeebled and pronouncedly reactionary feudal states in colonial India, but adopted a general policy of aligning itself and supporting non-progressive forces in the country. Lord Lytton openly declared in 1876 that the Crown of England should henceforth be identified with the hopes, the aspirations, the sympathies and the interests of a powerful native aristocracy'. Temple wrote, 'towards the end of my time (1848-80) I thought that a native aristocracy based on antiquity and on the traditions of indigenous rule might be consolidated and developed under British rule.'[11]

The introduction of a relatively free press during the first half of the nineteenth century was one of the progressive acts of the British government. After the Mutiny, with a few zigzags, the general policy of the government was to curtail increasingly the freedom of the press.

While Britain aggressively intervened in the social life of the Indian people during the pre-Mutiny period and campaigned against barbarous social practices like suttee and legislated against a number of them, it adopted a general policy of neutrality regarding social matters after 1857. Social reform groups like those of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and others, which got active support of the government in the former period in their crusade against reactionary social institutions and practices, had, after the Mutiny, not only to combat the forces of social reaction but also the apathy of the state in achieving their progressive work. Such an attitude on the part of the government only tended to strengthen the traditionally entrenched conservative forces of society.

Thus, the policy of Britain regarding India underwent almost a metamorphosis after 1857. Its former orientation towards and support to the new progressive forces within the Indian society was replaced by a growing gravitation and support to the conservative forces of that society.

Principal Events between 1857 and 1885

Before tracing the rise of the Indian National Congress which was founded in 1885 by the liberal Indian intelligentsia supported by a section of the commercial bourgeoisie and which signalized the first real growth of the Indian national movement on an all-India basis, we will refer to some of the principal events between 1857 and 1885.

The social forces of the old society were vanquished in their final attempt at rehabilitating their former power and status in 1857. They were too exhausted and weakened to embark upon a fresh enterprise in future.

The new social forces namely the intelligentsia and the comercial bourgeoisie, which were to be the pioneers of the first organized nationalist movement, had still not matured to begin their historic task. It was only after 1870 that, due to the combination of a number of factors, the country was again permeated with serious political ferment and the new social forces acquired appreciable political consciousness and economic and numerial strength and began to be politically articulate. The new development resulted in the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885.

The period between 1857 and 1870, however, witnessed two anti-British movements the declared aim of which was the armed overthrow of the British government. These were, the movement of the Wahabis, a militant Muslim sect, whose adherents had participated in the revolt of 1857 and who, after it was suppressed, continued their activities for some years, and that of a group of Marathas who, undaunted by the defeat of 1857, carried on subsequently, conspirational activity for the same aim. By 1871, the Wahabi movement, after a series of armed collisions, was successfully suppressed by the government. The anti-British conspirational Maratha centre at Poona was unearthed in 1863 and suppressed by the government. These two movements were the last remnants of the revolt.

Disastrous Famines and Peasant Uprisings

It was, however, after 1870 that large-scale political and economic discontent developed culminating in the rise of the premier political organization of the Indian nation, the Indian National Congress established in 1885. In the post-Mutiny period, the discontent of the agrarian population began to grow steadily due to their progressive impoverishment under the British rule. The increasing burden of land revenue and rents was intensely felt by the peasant population. The crippling of handicraft and artisan industries had reached serious dimensions by 1870 resulting in a disastrous overpressure on agriculture. The agricultural depression of 1870 seriously affected the farmers and led to an alarming growth of indebtedness among them. A number of disastrous famines broke out between 1867 and 1880. The famine of 1877 was exceptionally severe affecting an area of '200,000 square miles and a population of thirty-six millions', in Bombay, Madras and other parts of the country.[13]

> 'The group of famines which occurred between 1865 and 1880 are important, not only for the suffering and loss of life involved, but because they happened at a transitional period when India was gradually changing on to a cash basis . . . most ryots were forced to go to their moneylenders, and the famine following the slump meant the final degradation and enslavement of the producer.'[13]

The discontent of the peasantry born of the economic distress broke out in the form of a number of peasant riots, the Deccan Peasant Rising of 1875 being the most serious among them. The government recognized the gravity of the situation and appointed the Deccan Ryots Commission in the same year to investigate into the whole agrarian situation. Due to the havoc worked by frequently occurring famines, it also appointed the Famine Commission of 1878.

The financial burden of the Second Afghan War and the extravagant and spectacular Durbar held at Delhi in 1877 to proclaim Queen Victoria as the Empress of India while a famine was raging in the country, intensified the resentment of the people. Further, the Vernacular Press Act of 1878 restricting the freedom of the Indian Press and the Arms Act of 1879, both enacted during the viceroyalty of Lord Lytton, only fanned the fire of rapidly gathering discontent of the people. The situation threatened to be almost explosive.

Ilbert Bill

There were other factors also which contributed to widen the gulf between the Indian people and the British. The consciousness of being the members of the ruling white race bred an arrogant attitude towards the Indians among most of the British, official and non-official.[14] This provoked bitter anti-British feeling among the Indians.

When Lord Ripon projected the Ilbert Bill providing equal treatment of the Indians and Europeans in the sphere of criminal jurisdiction, the entire European community organized powerful and fierce agitation against it. A plot was also hatched 'to put the Viceroy on board a steamer at Chandpat Ghat and send him to England via the Cape.'[15]

> 'It is this consciousness of inherent superiority of the European which has won for us India. However well educated and clever a native be, and however brave he may have proved himself, I believe

that no rank which we can bestow upon him would cause him to be considered as an equal by the British officer.'[16]

The Bill was defeated as a result of the almost rabid opposition of the European community. It had the effect of accentuating the bitter feelings between the two races. The Indians were disillusioned about the impartiality of the British administration. The racial discrimination was also reflected in the fact that all higher posts in the administration were the preserve of the Europeans. The educated classes of the Indian people especially resented this.

When the age limit for the Civil Service Examination held in England was reduced in 1877 from twenty-one to nineteen, Surendra Nath Banerjee organized agitation against it, describing it as a deliberate attempt by the government to make it difficult for an Indian to get higher posts in the administration.

The government further removed the import duties on cotton goods in 1882 with a view to aiding the Lancashire tertile industry. This open partisanship of the British economic interests at the expense of India increased its unpopularity. Increasing discontent grew among different sections of the Indian people, the agriculturists, the artisans and the intelligentsia.

Growing Discontent and New Leadership

The educated middle class intellectuals were also moved by another and a higher motive when they organized and led the nationalist movement in India. The new education which they had imbibed in the schools and colleges established by the British, brought them the knowledge of the democratic thought of the modern Europe and also of the nationalist struggles for freedom which took place in different countries. The educated Indians read about the War of Independence of the American people, of the Italian struggle for national liberation from the Austrian domination, of the Irish struggle for freedom. They also studied the works of Thomas Paine, Spencer, Burke, Mill, Voltaire, Mazzini, and other writers who preached the doctrines of individual and national liberty. These educated Indians became the ideological and political leaders of the nationalist movement in India.

The leadership provided by the new intelligentsia to the forces of rising Indian nationalism was historically progressive in contrast to the feudal leadership of the forces of the anti-British Revolt of 1857. The new intelligentsia was imbued with the ideas of modern nationalism and democracy. It wanted, in the initial stage with the aid of the British democracy, to evolve an Indian nation, socially, politically, and economically united, free and progressive, in contrast to the leadership of the revolt of 1857 which aspired, after removing the foreign rule, to restore the old India based on feudal disunity or at best to construct a federation of independent feudal states based on absolutism.

The period between 1870 and 1885 witnessed a steady growth of a nationalist press and literature which reflected the growing discontent among the people. 'The Press, the theatre, and the secret revolutionary societies were especially active in Bengal in forwarding nationalist aims. The lives of Garibaldi and Mazzini were translated, whilst the goal of national liberation was proclaimed in such work as the *History of India Gained in a Dream*.'[17] *Neel-Darpan*, a drama in Bengalee, portrayed the sufferings and struggles of the workers of European-owned indigo plantations.

The political and economic discontent of the Indian people which had been gathering steadily, especially after 1870, almost threatened to reach an explosive point by 1883. The anti-popular measures of Lord Lytton's government seriously accentuated this discontent. 'These ill-starred measures of reaction, combined with Russian methods of police repression, brought India under Lord Lytton within measurable distance of a revolutionary outbreak, and it was only in time that Mr. Hume and his Indian advisers were inspired to intervene.'[18]

Hume's Feeling for "Safety Valve"

Hume, who subsequently in co-operation with the Liberal Indian intelligentsia founded the Indian National Congress, recognized that the popular discontent against the British government threatened to explode into a revolt. Being in the government service till 1882, he 'received possession of the very voluminous secret police reports which revealed the growth of popular discontent and the spreading of underground conspiratorial organization.'[19]

It was the perspective of a serious revolt in the country that prompted Hume to interview Lord Dufferin, then the Viceroy of India. Soon after, Hume, in collaboration with outstanding liberal intellectuals in the country, founded the Indian National Congress in 1885. The Congress could serve as a focal point for national discontent, especially that of the educated classes, and guide this discontent in channels of constitutional movements for the Indian political advance. It could also keep the government informed about the views of the educated classes regarding the measures of the government.

That the Congress was designed as a safety valve for revolutionary discontent was made clear by Hume itself. 'A safety valve for the escape of great and growing forces, generated by our own action, was urgently needed and no more efficacious safety valve, than our Congress Movement could possibly be devised.'[20]

In his correspondence with Sir Auckland Colvin, Hume remarked that

> 'No choice was left to those who gave the primary impetus to the movement. The ferment due to the creation of Western ideas, education, invention and appliances, was at work with a rapidly increasing-intensity, and it became of paramount importance to find for its products an overt and constitutional channel for discharge, instead of leaving them to fester as they had already commenced to do, under the surface.'[21]

Other historians also take the same view.

> 'The years just before the Congress were among the most dangerous since 1857. It was Hume, among English officials, who saw the impending disaster and tried to prevent it. . . . He went to Simla in order to make clear to the authorities how almost desperate the situation become. . . . It is probable that his visit made the new Viceroy, who was a brilliant man of affairs, realize the gravity of the situation and encouraged Hume to go on with the formation of the Congress. The time was fully ripe for this All-Indian movement. In place of an agrarian revolt, which would have sympathy and support of the educated classes, it gave the rising classes a national platform from which to create a New India.'[22]

There already existed a number of political organizations in various parts of the country before the Indian National

Congress was formed, such as the Indian Association founded by S. N. Banerjee in Bengal; the Bombay Association started by Dadabhai Naoroji and Jagannath Sankerseth in Bombay; the Sarvajanik Sabha established by Chiplunkar in Poona; and others. There did not, however, still exist a national organization on an all-India basis.

Founding of Indian National Congress

The Indian National Congress, the premier political organization of the Indian people, held its first session in Bombay in 1885. It was attended by almost all outstanding leaders of Indian nationalism.

The Liberal intelligentsia who dominated the Congress from 1885 to 1905 were the leaders of the Indian nationalist movement in its first phase. There were such distinguished figures among them as W. C. Bonnerjee, Anand Mohan Bose, Lal Mohan Ghose, A. C. Mazumdar, Rash Bihari Ghose, Surendra Nath Banerjee, and R. C. Dutt from Bengal; Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Badruddin Tyabji, Apte, Agarkar, Telang, Ranade, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, D. E. Wachha, Malabari and Chandavarkar from Bombay; P. R. Naidu, Subramannya Aiyer, Ananda Charlu, and Virraghavachariar from Madras; also Keshav Pillai, Pandit Malaviya, and Pandit Dhar. Liberal Englishmen like Hume, Wedderburn and Henry Cotton also played a conspicuous role in the development of the Congress organization and its activities.[23]

W. C. Bonnerjee, the President of the first session of the Congress, enumerated the principal objects of the Congress as (1) the development of close relations between national workers, (2) the dissolution of race, creed, and provincial prejudices among all lovers of the country and further development and consolidation of the feeling of national unity among them, (3) the recording of the conclusions on vital Indian problems reached by educated Indians after earnest discussions of these problems, and (4) outlining of the programme of work for the next year.

The Congress passed resolutions formulating for the first time demands by a national organization, such as the abolition of the India Council, simultaneous examinations for the I.C.S. and raising the age of candidates, admission of elected members to existing legislative councils, and creation of councils in the N.W.F.P., Oudh, and the Punjab.[24]

Thus, the demands of the first Congress, started and directed by the Liberal politicians, were modest and restricted to administrative reform and introduction of the elective principle in legislatures. Further, Hume, on behalf of the Congress, at the close of the session, proposed cheers for Victoria, the Queen-Empress, thereby stressing the loyalist character of the Congress.

Liberal Leadership, Its Principles and Methods

We shall proceed to describe the principles and methods of struggle of Liberal nationalism.

The Indian Liberals had almost unlimited faith in the British democracy. They considered the British rule in India as providentially brought about and designed to lift India to a high plane of free, progressive, democratic, national existence. 'The rationale of British rule in India is its capacity and providential purpose of fostering the political education of the country on the largest scale in civil and public activities', said Justice Ranade.[25]

The Indian Liberals looked to Britain for guiding the Indian people to overcome their social and cultural backwardness and for training them in the art of representative government. Surendranath Bannerji said in 1895, 'To England we look for inspiration and guidance. . . . From England must come the crowning mandate which will enfranchise our peoples. England is our political guide . . . in the exalted sphere of political duty'.[26] And further, 'We have great confidence in the justice and generosity of the English people. We have abounding faith in the liberty-loving instincts of the greatest representative assembly in the world, the British House of Commons, the Mother of Parliaments, where sits enthroned the newly enfranchised democracy of those islands. . . . Wherever the English have raised their flag and have formed their governments, they have formed them upon the representative model.'[27]

The Indian Liberals considered the interests of Britain and India allied rather than antagonistic. Hence they were loyalists and enthusiastic champions of British connections. S.

Bannerjee declared: 'It is not severance that we look forward to—but unification, permanent embodiment as an integral part of that great Empire that has given the rest of the world the models of free institutions.'[28]

Dadabhai Naoroji expressed the same Liberal view when he said, 'Let us speak out like men and proclaim that we are loyal to the backbone; that we understand the benefits English rule has conferred upon us.'[29]

The Liberals recognized that the Congress did not represent the masses but only interpreted their grievances. 'The Congress was, indeed, not the voice of the masses but it was the duty of their educated compatriots to interpret their grievances and offer suggestions for their redress.'[30]

The Liberals believed in orderly progress, subscribed to the principle of slow evolution and were opposed to any revolutionary change. 'The people of India are not fond of sudden changes and revolutions. They do not ask for new constitutions, issuing like armed Minervas from the heads of Legislative Jupiters. . . . They desire to strengthen the present government and to bring it more in touch with the people. They desire to see some Indian members in the Secretary of State's Council, and in the Viceroy's Executive Council, representing Indian agriculture and industries. . . . They wish to represent the interests of the Indian people in the discussion of every important administrative question.'[31]

Believing in orderly progress in alliance with and with the aid of the British nation, the Liberals rejected all revolutionary, sudden changes and methods of struggle. To achieve their programme, they adopted the weapon of constitutional agitation, whereby they, on the one hand, strove to rouse and educate the Indian people, and, on the other, to convince the British of the justness of the demands of the Indian people and of their democratic duty to meet them. Constitutional agitation was agitation by methods which they were entitled to adopt to bring about the changes they desired through the action of constitutional authorities. . . . Three things were excluded: rebellion, aiding or abetting a foreign invasion, and resort to crime. Roughly speaking, barring these three things, all else was constitutional. No doubt, everything that was constitutional was not wise or expedient. But that was a different matter. Prayers and appeals to justice lay at one end. Passive resistance, including even its extreme form of non-payment of taxes till redress was obtained, lay at the other end.'[32]

Its Progressive Role

In spite of their numerous political misconceptions, the Indian Liberals, who represented the interests of the development of a modern bourgeois society in India, played a progressive role. They were the architect of the first all-India political national organization. They infused national consciousness among sections of the Indian people, disseminated among them democratic conceptions, and popularized the idea of representative institutions. They exhorted them to feel as Indians, irrespective of all provincial or communal distinctions. They were passionate supporters of the spread of the rich democratic and scientific culture of modern Europe in India and zealously campaigned against the medieval obscurantism and authoritarian social structure inherited from the pre-British period. They stood for democratization of social relations and economic advance through industrialization.

The intelligentsia, the upper stratum of the educated classes, and the commercial bourgeoisie (the industrial bourgeoisie had not still come into existence to any appreciable degree in 1885) formed the main social basis of the Indian National Congress at its inception. The programme of the Congress embodying mainly such items as, the Indianization of Services, the removal of discrimination in trade, and others, reflected the interests of these groups of Indian society.

A number of the political misconceptions of the Liberals were the result of their inability to comprehend the real nature of the existing relations between Britain and India. They could not see that India was an economic colony of British capitalism and as such Britain could not permit the free economic development of the country. The economic development of India had to be subordinated to the needs of British capital and, therefore, necessarily retarded. The Liberals could not perceive this objectively existing conflict of interests of Britain and those of India. Further, since her political rule was a means primarily to safeguard the British interests, Britain could not part with power or grant administrative reforms of a far-reaching character. The problem was not ethical but was that of conflicting political and economic interests.

The Congress under the leadership of the Indian Liberals from 1885-1905 fought for administrative reforms such as the separation of judicial and executive functions, the right of the Indians to be admitted to public services on equal terms and subsequently for the Indianization of Services, for the rescinding of the Arms Act, against the economic drain which engendered poverty of the Indian people, and heavy military expenditure. In 1892, the Congress passed the Resolution of Pandit Malaviya asking the government to help the resuscitation of declining handicraft industries. The Liberals stood also for Swadeshi which was adopted at the Congress session at Calcutta in 1906 as a method to accelerate the industrial development of India. They also fought against the anti-Indian legislation in countries like the Transvaal, the Free State and the Cape Colony, in 1895.

The Liberals stood for representative institutions and the elective principle. They demanded legislatures by the people and controlling the executives.

Unfulfilled Demands

The Liberals, through the Indian National Congress and by methods of constitutional agitation, reinforced with highly emotional appeals to the democratic conscience and traditions of the British people, endeavoured to secure from the British government the fulfilment of demands such as administrative reforms, representative institutions, the stoppage of economic drain, popular and technical education, protection for Indian industries, and repeal of repressive Acts.

However, even as late as 1918, most of the important demands made by the Congress at its different sessions and embodied in various resolutions remained unsatisfied. Among the demands (embodied in various Congress Resolutions) which remained unfulfilled even as late as 1918, were those of the abolition of the India Council and simultaneous examinations for the I.C.S. (1885); separation of judicial from executive function (1886); amendment of the Arms Acts and Rules (1887); technical and industrial development (1888); reform of land revenue policy (1889) and that of Currency

(1892); abolition of forced labour (1893); repeal of cotton excise duty (1893); improvement of the conditions of Indians in Colonies (1894); repeal of the Bengal, Madras and Bombay Regulations of 1818, 1819 and 1827 respectively as well as that of the Sedition Act (1897); repeal of the Indian Universities Act and Official Secrets Act (1903); advance in local self-government (1905); repeal of the Criminal Law Amendment and Newspapers Acts (1908); free and compulsory primary education (1908); repeal of the Seditious Meetings Act and the Indian Press Act (1910); and free and compulsory primary education embodied in Gokhale's Bill (1910).[33]

In spite of its loyalist character, the Indian National Congress incurred the displeasure of the government soon after its establishment. Annie Besant refers to the instance of a person 'who was called on to give a security of Rs. 20,000 to keep the peace' for attending the Congress session in 1887 'in defiance of his district officer'.[34] A circular stated that 'the presence of government officials, even as visitors, at such meetings is not advisable and their taking part in the proceedings of any such meetings is also prohibited'.[35]

Thus the government viewed with disfavour even the constitutional agitation organized by the Congress for such mild demands as administrative reforms, the freedom of the press, the stoppage of economic drain, and others.

The government enacted Section 124(A) and 153(A) in 1897 to combat the Congress activities. Secret Press Committees were established in 1898 restricting the freedom of the press. Lord Curzon wrote in 1900 to the Secretary of State: 'The Congress is tottering to its fall, and one of my great ambitions while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise.'[36]

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the government added to its armoury a number of weapons such as the Criminal Law Amendment Act (1908); the Newspapers Act (1908); the Indian Press Act (1910); and the Seditious Meetings Act (1910). This led to a serious curtailment of civil liberties such as freedom of the press, platform, and assembly.

Growing Disillusionment

The non-fulfilment of the most important of their demands, even within the system of British rule, and repression slowly brought about moods of disillusionment among the Indian Liberals regarding the hope of the co-operation of the British Democracy in introducing representative institutions in India and in accomplishing social, educational, and economic advance of the Indian people. Surendranath Bannerjee remarked that 'the history of the Civil Services is one unbroken record of broken promises'.[37] Pandit Dhar, in his presidential address to the Congress in 1911, remarked: 'The root cause of most of our misfortunes which, if not corrected, forebodes serious disasters in the future, is the growth of an unsympathetic and illiberal spirit in the bureaucracy towards the new-born hopes and ideals of the Indian people'.[38] Bhupendranath Basu, the president of the Congress in 1914 said: 'The government of the country was still vested in a foreign civil service. . . . All the great departments of the state are under their control. They could be more than human if they did not desire to remain as they are.'[39]

With the steady disintegration of their faith in the British government, especially after the experience of Lord Curzon's regime, and due to the pressure of the militant nationalist group which had emerged at the end of the nineteenth century and was gathering strength in the first years of the twentieth century, the Indian Liberals expanded their political programme from that of the demand for mere administrative reform to that of the demand for self-government. In 1906, the Calcutta Congress presided over by Dadabhai Naoroji adopted the new programme of Swaraj or self-government ('the system of government obtaining in the self-governing British Colonies'). The Calcutta Congress, further, adopted the programme of the boycott movement, Swadeshi, and national education, which the Liberals also endorsed.

The Indian Liberals, though they changed their political aim from mere administrative reform to self-government, did not adopt extra-parliamentary forms of struggle. This was due to their impregnable faith in the efficacy of the methods of constitutional agitation. Dadabhai even in 1905 had implicit faith in this weapon. 'What is wanted for us is to learn the lesson from the English themselves—to agitate most largely and most perseveringly by petitions, demonstrations and meetings, all quite peacefully but enthusiastically conducted.'[40]

As a result of the spread of political disillusionment regarding the principles and methods of the Liberals among the ranks of the Congress, a new group of militant nationalists having a different political ideology and conception of struggle emerged and crystallized within the Congress. This group, known as the Extremists, began to grow rapidly at the end of the nineteenth century due to a number of reasons.

A disastrous famine swept over the country at the close of the century resulting in great economic distress. India was also visited by bubonic plague of a virulent type which took a heavy toll of life. These events undermined the British rule in the eyes of the people.

Political discontent among the people was further accentuated by the high-handed measures of Lord Curzon during his career as Viceroy. 'His curtailment of the powers of the Calcutta Corporation, his Official Secrets Act, his officialization of the Universities which made education costly . . . his Tibetan Expedition . . . and finally his Partition of Bengal, broke the back of loyal India and roused a new spirit in the nation. Even more galling to our sense of self-respect than his speech in Calcutta regarding our untruthfulness, was his sweeping charge that we Indians were, by our environment, our heritage and our upbringing, "unequal to the responsibilities of high office under British Rule".'[41]

Unemployment among educated youths had considerably increased in the beginning of the twentieth century, especially in Bengal. Doctrines such as that of slow and orderly progress accomplished with the aid of the British government and methods such as mere petitions and speeches which, by experience, were found ineffectual, made these youths disorient from the Liberal school and rally round the new school of which Tilak, Bepin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo and Barindra Ghose, and Lala Lajpat Rai, were the outstanding leaders. In fact, the social support to the new nationalism came from the middle classes. The social basis of the Indian national movement, which was hitherto restricted to the upper class intellectuals and sections of the commercial bourgeoisie, was extended to the lower middle classes from 1905 onwards.

There were other factors which gave impetus to the growth of militant nationalism in India. The defeat of Czarism by Japan in 1905 and that of Italy at Adowa exploded the belief in the invincibility of the white race. The Indians began to shed their inferiority complex and feel confident of removing the British rule.

Emergence of Militant Nationalist Leadership

Refusal to meet the political and economic demands by the government and its repressive measures against the growing national movement shook the faith of an increasing number of Indians in the ideology and technique of Liberal nationalism. They began to rally round the group of militant nationalists (the Extremists), whose ideology and methods we will now briefly describe.

The militant nationalists drew inspiration from the India's past, invoked the great episodes in the history of the Indian people, and tried to infuse national pride and self-respect among them. They criticized the idealizing of the western and specially British culture by the Liberals as cultural capitulation to the British rulers. The militant nationalists asserted that this would only engender an inferiority complex among the Indians and suppress their national pride and self-confidence so vital to the struggle for freedom.

The militant nationalists revived the memories of the Vedic past of the Hindus, the great phase of the reigns of Ashoka and Chandragupta, the heroic deeds of Rana Pratap and Shivaji, the epic patriotism of Laxmibai, the Queen of Jhansi and leader of the National Revolt of 1857.

The philosophers of militant nationalism believed in the special genius of India. They propounded that the Indian people were endowed with a special spiritual consciousness. 'The Hindus constitute a distinct people. The regulative idea in the evolution of Hindu character, the idea which has given a peculiar shape and colouring to the entire history of the race, is their innate consciousness of the spiritual and the eternal.'[42]

The Bengal school of militant nationalism led by Pal and Aurobindo Ghose was influenced by the neo-Vedantic movement of Swami Vivekanand. 'Neo-Vedantism, which forms the very soul and essence of what may be called Neo-Hinduism, has been seeking to realize the old spiritual ideals of the race . . . by the idealization and the spiritualization of the concrete contents and actual relations of Life. It demands, consequently, a social, an economic, and a political reconstruction . . . The spiritual note of the present nationalist movement is entirely derived from this Vedantic thought.'[43]

Thus the nationalist movement, aiming at political freedom from the British rule and at the establishment of an Indian society and state on a democratic basis and on the basis also of the modern capitalist economy, became a function of an all-embracing religious movement. Nationalism was expressed in religious terms and clothed in religio-mystical form.

The Maharashtra school of new nationalism led by Tilak, while resuscitating the memory of the cultural past of India and castigating the Liberals for what it considered their cultural capitulation to the west, did not clothe the movement for Swaraj in any mystical religious garb. To rouse the population of Maharashtra to acts of heroism and self-sacrifice, Tilak revived the memory of Shivaji's struggle against the Mogul Empire for the liberation of Maharashtra. He even revived and utilized Ganapati festivals for political propaganda. To counteract the inertia and passivity of the people, he, further, declared action as the *raison d'etre* of the Bhagawat Gita. However, the new nationalism in Maharashtra was not dressed in a religio-mystical philosophical garb as in Bengal.

The militant nationalists or the Extremists criticized the Liberals for looking to Britain for the political salvation of India. The Extremists declared that real interests and not abstract principles determined political practice. They argued that Britain could not permit the free, unfettered, development of the Indian industries, a condition for making India prosperous, since it would militate against the British industries. If the British government Indianized the Services, it would mean material loss to hundreds of Englishmen. The nationalist movement was itself the product of the conflict of interests of Britain on the one hand and of India on the other. Mere arguments and appeals to the democratic conscience and traditions of the British could not remove the fact of this conflict of interests. Lajpat Rai remarked, 'Prayers to Almighty God may be useful in intensifying your desire for political liberty and political privileges. Prayers to the ruling nation may be useful to you in proving the *uselessness* of appealing to the higher sense of man in matters political where the interests of one nation clash with those of another.'[44] Tilak aptly defined the basic difference between the two groups thus: 'Political rights will have to be fought for. The Moderates think that these can be won by persuasion. We think that they can only be got by strong pressure.'[45]

The militant nationalists infused national consciousness among the Indian people. They declared the methods of arguments and appeals as futile and gave programmes of action such as the Boycott in which the mass of the people could participate and the pressure of which could be felt by the British ruling nation. Regarding the efficacy of the Boycott of British goods, Lala Lajpat Rai said, 'The logic of losing business is more likely to impress this nation of shopkeepers than any argument based on the ethics of justice.'[46]

Since the militant nationalists considered the interests of Britain and of India antagonistic rather than allied, they did not aim at mere administrative reform or the Indianization of Services, but declared that self-government or political power alone could help to accomplish basic, social, economic, and cultural progress. In other words, they wanted to end and not to mend the system. The non-fulfilment of their hopes in the British government had prompted even the Liberals in 1906 to support the demand for self-government.

Regarding constitutional agitation, the Extremists declared that it had not much usefulness in a country ruled autocratically by a foreign nation. The Indian Constitution, they argued, was the creation of the Act of British Parliament which expressed the sovereign will of the British people. It was not the creation of the Indian people. As such, the Indian government based on this Constitution was responsible to the British Parliament and not to the Indian people. Constitutional agitation could be effective only in countries like England where the people elected their Parliament and, through it, controlled the government.

"Swadeshi and Boycott"

The militant nationalists ardently believed in Swadeshi and zealously propagated it among the people. Regarding Swadeshi, Lajpat Rai said, 'I regard it as the salvation of my country. The Swadeshi movement ought to make us self-respecting, self-reliant, self-supporting and last, not least, manly. The Swadeshi movement ought to teach us how to organize our capital, our resources, our labour, our energies and our talents, to the greatest good of all Indians, irrespective of creed, colour or caste. It ought to unite us, our religious and denominational differences notwithstanding. In my opinion, Swadeshi ought to be the common religion of the United India.'[47]

Swadeshi was, according to the new nationalists, a weapon forged by the people to achieve the industrial and general economic regeneration and advance for India. Its implementing demanded great sacrifice especially, as Tilak remarked, from the middle classes who were the greatest consumers of foreign goods. Tilak said that 'Self-help, determination, and sacrifice are needed' to fulfil the Swadeshi programme.

The Boycott movement conceived and organized by the militant nationalists was, on the other hand, openly and aggressively anti-British. It had a comprehensive programme and included not only the exclusion of British goods but also such items as the renunciation of titles and government posts and the boycott of councils and schools. The protagonists of the Boycott movement used it as a weapon to compel the government to rescind the Partition of Bengal and stop repression.

Lala Lajpat Rai explained the significance of the Boycott movement thus: 'The meaning of the boycott is this . . . The primary thing is prestige of the government and the boycott strikes at the root of that prestige. The illusory thing they call prestige is more powerful and potent than authority itself and we propose to do this by means of boycott . . . We desire to turn our faces away from the Government House and turn them to the huts of the people. We desire to stop our mouth so far as appeal to the government is concerned and open our mouth with a new appeal to . . . the masses of our people. This is the psychology, this is the ethics, this is the spiritual significance of the boycott movement.'[48] The Boycott was thus primarily meant as a means to rouse among the people a militant determination to win Swaraj.

Jawaharlal Nehru on Militant Nationalism

The founders of the new nationalism were subsequently criticized for basing the movement of Swaraj on the Hindu religion and traditions of the Hindu history. The critics averred that this not only introduced religious obscurantism and mysticism in politics but also led to estrange the Muslims who comprised about a third of the Indian population. It also weakened the secular character of the political movement.

> The insistence on orthodox religion as the heart of the national movement, and the proclamation of the supposed spiritual superiority of the ancient Hindu civilization to modern "Western" civilization (what modern psychologists would no doubt term a compensatory delusion), inevitably retarded and weakened the real advance of the national movement and of political consciousness, while the emphasis on Hinduism must bear a share of the responsibility for the alienation of wide sections of Moslem opinion from the national movement.'[49]

The Left nationalism of Bengal, under the leadership of B. C. Pal and Aurobindo Ghose, was based on the religious mysticism of Hinduism. Because of this, many nationalists, who would otherwise have supported it, disoriented from it and even remained with the Liberals. Jawaharlal Nehru advanced this as one of the main reasons why Pandit Motilal Nehru abstained from the nationalist movement in 1907. 'And then the background of these movements was a religious nationalism which was alien to his nature. He did not look back to a revival in India of ancient times . . . Socially speaking, the revival of Indian nationalism in 1907 was definitely reactionary.'[50]

A nationalist movement ought to be based on a programme of the secular interests of the people. Then alone, the entire nation, irrespective of caste or community, could be brought within its orbit. 'The political, social, and economic programme of the national movement, should and can unite the masses of the Indian people above, across and apart, from religious affiliations. Such a strengthened, secularized, modernized, united democratic movement, can be the strongest force at the present stage to counter communal agitation.'[51]

One of the reasons why the Muslims did not join the nationalist movement in the year 1905 and the following period was, perhaps, because Indian nationalism was openly based by its leaders on the Hindu ideology. Pal, Aurobindo, and other leaders 'sought to build on a basis of Hindu religion for their agitation and to identify the national awakening with a revival of Hinduism. By this act they cut off the Moslem masses from the national movement and opened the way to the Government's astute counter-move with the formation of the Moslem League in 1906.'[52]

The militant nationalists were distinguished for the great qualities of immense self-sacrifice and suffering for the cause of freedom. They constituted the first batch of martyrs in the nationalist movement. Their very programme brought them into conflict with the government. They experienced imprisonment and deportations and suffered privations. Their unflinching adherence to their ideal and programme made them idols of the people and household names in the country. Thousands of youths drew inspiration from them and became steadfast fighters in the struggle for Swaraj. Tilak, Pal, Aurobindo and Barindra Ghose, and Lala Lajpat Rai, were the outstanding leaders of the new nationalism, all of whom lived lives consecrated to the cause of Swaraj. Tilak, who suffered most, became the very symbol of political suffering for the ideal of freedom.

The new nationalism gave militancy and independence to the Indian nationalist movement. It gave it a proud ego and instilled self-reliance into it. It taught the Indian people that Swaraj could not be achieved without suffering. It further extended the movement to the lower middle classes and even, to some extent, to a section of the masses. The general strike of the Bombay textile workers as a protest against the arrest of Tilak in 1908 was 'the first political action of the Indian working class' and was hailed by Lenin.

Militant Nationalists, Their Chief Activities

We will now briefly review the most important of the activities of the new nationalist group.

Tilak, recognized as the most outstanding among the leaders of the new group due to his powerful intellect, robust political realism, indomitable will and self-sacrifice, was deeply influenced in his early days by such stalwart nationalists as

Chiplunkar and Agarkar. He received his baptism in political suffering in 1882 when along with Agarkar, he was sentenced to four months' imprisonment for publishing objectionable articles.

Tilak was associated with the New English School and the Fergusson College, the two educational institutions the members of which were a group of intellectuals animated with deep patriotism and self-sacrificing spirit. In 1880, he started the *Kesari* (a Marathi weekly) and the *Maratha* (an English weekly) which became powerful organs to spread the principles and policies of the new nationalism.

Tilak resuscitated the Ganapati celebrations in 1893. These celebrations served as a cover for organizing extensive nationalist agitation. 'Lectures, processions, singing parties, are the invariable accompaniments of the festival and they not only afford an outlet to the religious zeal of the people but help in fostering the national sentiment also, and creating interest in the outstanding questions of the day.'[53]

Tilak, further, revived the Shivaji festival in 1895. The political motif of this revival was to revive in the people the memory of Shivaji, the liberator of Maharashtra from the domination of the Moguls, and thereby kindle in them a heroic determination to achieve freedom from the British rule.

Tilak and his compatriots launched a campaign of relief during the great famine which broke out at the end of the nineteenth century. Tilak, further, advised the people, though in guarded language, to pay government dues only if it was economically possible for them to do so. 'Will you when the Queen desires that none should die, when the Governor declares that all should live . . . will you kill yourself by timidity and starvation? If you have money to pay Government dues, pay them by all means. But if you have not, will you sell your things away only to avoid the supposed wrath of the subordinate Government officers? Can you not be bold even when in the grip of death?'[54]

India was visited by bubonic plague during this period. The methods adopted by the government to combat it kindled considerable resentment among the people. Tilak severely criticized the official measures in *Kesari*. Soon after, Rand, the health officer and Lt. Ayerst were shot by terrorists. The Chaphekar brothers who were arrested, in this connection, were tried and sentenced to death. The government thought that the propaganda of Tilak created an atmosphere conducive to terrorist activity. He was arrested in 1895, on a charge of sedition and after a trial, sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment.

It was when Tilak was in prison that the government added Section 124 (A) and 153 (A) to the Indian Penal Code.

The opening years of the twentieth century were stormy. Political discontent had grown among the people due to the inability of the government to organize effective relief during the period of plague and famine. The non-fulfilment of the Congress demands was steadily engendering scepticism and even disbelief in the mind of the politically conscious intellectuals in the methods and programme of the Liberals. The educated Indians were also extensively studying the European history, including the history of the French Revolution, the American War of Independence, the national revolutionary struggles of the Italian people against the Austrian domination, and the Irish struggle for freedom. They were reading the works of Thomas Paine, Mazzini, Voltaire, Rousseau, and others. They were building a new political outlook and increasingly gravitating on the one hand to the school of new nationalist thought and on the other to conspiratorial terrorism.

The political measures during Lord Curzon's rule fanned into flame the gathering discontent of the people. The Partition of Bengal transformed it into a conflagration.

The Indian politicians of almost all political hues interpreted the Calcutta Corporation Act as an attempt by Lord Curzon to strike at the local self-government of the people, the Indian Universities' Act as an endeavour to limit higher education, and the Partition of Bengal as a measure to disrupt the political unity of the Bengali people. The Hon. Mr. Chaudhari commented that Partition would 'drive a wedge between Hindu and Mahomedan. Lord Curzon apparently took the Vambery view that India could only be held on the basis of racial animosity . . . That was the reason for the Partition of Bengal . . . to set up in Dacca a rival Mahomedan centre to the Hindu centre of Calcutta.'[55]

The Partition was universally resented. It brought about united opposition of all political groups. Poet Rabindranath Tagore, Sir Gurudas Banerjee, a Judge, and the Maharajas of

Mymensingh and Cosimbazar, joined in the protest.

Slogans of Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott, and National education, emerged during the anti-Partition campaign. Tilak carried on a vigorous propaganda of this programme and recommended its adoption at the session of the Congress held at Calcutta in 1906. It was adopted, being supported by Dadabhai Naoroji and other Liberal leaders. Tilak became a most popular all-India leader of the nationalist movement from that year.

All nationalist leaders, Tilak, Pal, Aurobindo, Barindra, Lajpat Rai, and others, organized a country-wide campaign through the press and the platform to popularize the boycott. The campaign was successful and seriously affected the demand of British goods and gave a fillip to the Indian industries. *The Englishman*, an Anglo-Indian paper of Calcutta, wrote, 'It is absolutely true that Calcutta warehouses are full of fabrics that cannot be sold. Many prominent Marwari firms have been absolutely ruined, and a number of the biggest European import houses have had either to close down their piecegoods branch, or to put up with a very small business.—In boycott, the enemies of the Raj have found a most effective weapon for injuring British interests in the country . . .'[56]

The movement spread rapidly. The British trade was appreciably curtailed. Mass meetings, demonstrations, and hartals took place. *Kesari* and *Maratha* of Tilak in Bombay and *Samdhya*, *Bande Mataram*, and *Yugantar* in Bengal, educated the people in the new outlook and programme.

The government launched repression and increasingly intensified it. The Bengal Provincial Conference was dispersed by an executive order. Arrests and imprisonments of leaders, editors, propagandists and organizers of the movement took place.

Terrorist groups which sprang up mainly in Bengal, Maharashtra, and the Punjab, also became active. Political dacoities and assassinations of officials took place. A brief history of the terrorist and revolutionary movements during these years is narrated later on.

Congress Split in 1907

In 1907 the split in the Congress between the Liberals and the Left nationalists took place. The cleavage was inevitable since the Liberals, though steadily disillusioned about the British government, did not accept the ideology and methods of the new nationalists.

After a stormy session for two days, the Surat Congress, 1907, broke up in uproar. The Liberals immediately organized a convention and fixed the following constitution:

> 'The Indian National Congress has for its ultimate goal the attainment by India of self-government similar to that enjoyed by other members of the British Empire. It seeks to advance towards this goal by strictly constitutional means, by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration.'

The Extremists considered the adoption of this constitution by the Liberals as an attempt to keep them out of the Congress.

The government repression increased after 1907. It passed the Seditious Meetings Act in 1907 and the Indian Press Act in 1910.

In Bengal, *Bande Mataram*, *Yugantar*, and a number of other papers were suppressed by the government. Outstanding leaders of the movement such as Mitra, A. K. Dutt, S. Chakrawarti, and P. B. Das, were deported. Aurobindo Ghose was arrested in 1908 on a charge of being connected with a revolutionary conspiracy, but, due to lack of evidence, was acquitted. Before he could be arrested on a fresh charge, he left British India and settled in Pondicherry.

In 1908, Tilak, the indomitable leader of the new nationalism and the author of the cry 'Swaraj is my birthright and I will have it', was sentenced to six years' imprisonment for an article published in his paper and sent to Mandalay.

In the course of his speech in the court, Tilak said, 'There are higher Powers that rule the destinies of things and it may be the will of Providence, that the cause which I represent should prosper more by my suffering than by my remaining free.'[17]

In Mandalay jail, Tilak wrote *The Arctic Home of the Vedas and Gita Rahasya*. The books revealed his deep philosophical and historical interests and acumen.

In the Punjab, agrarian riots took place at Lahore, Lyallpur, and Rawalpindi as a result of the Canal Colony Bill and other grievances. Lajpat Rai and Ajitsingh were deported from the province.

Morley-Minto Reforms and After

Since, in spite of repression, the movement was gathering strength, the British government thought it politically expedient to conciliate the nationalists by a grant of political reforms. It introduced the Morley-Minto Reforms, providing for a minority of elected members to the Central and Provincial Legislative Councils. The Councils were only advisory bodies without any decisive final powers.

While the Extremist section declared the Reforms unsatisfactory, the Moderates hailed them. The Reforms had the effect of rehabilitating to some extent the Moderates' faith in the British intentions and pledges which had begun to shake due to the recent measures of the British government. The abolition of the Partition of Bengal in 1911 further strengthened that faith.

The First World War broke out in 1914.

The Secretary of State announced in the House of Commons that 'the goal of the British policy is progressive realization of responsible government' in India.

To get increased support of the Indian bourgeoisie to the war the government granted 3½ per cent import duty on cotton in 1916 which helped the growth of the Indian textile industries.

These measures, however, failed to conciliate the Left nationalist leaders who continued their agitation for Swaraj during the war. After emerging from prison in 1914, Tilak organized a campaign of Home Rule for India and founded the Home Rule League in Poona in 1916. Annie Besant started her All-India Home Rule League in Madras six months later.

The two wings of the Congress, the Moderates and the Extremists, united at the Lucknow Congress in 1916. Unity, however, proved ephemeral.

Another significant event was the alliance of the Congress and the Muslim League accomplished in 1916, known as the Lucknow Pact or the Congress-League Scheme. Britain was at war against Turkey, a Muslim state, and this had aroused strong Muslim sentiment against Britain. The agreed scheme included reforms such as elected majorities in the councils, increased powers of the councils, and half the members of the Viceroy's Executive to be the Indians.

The political alliance of the Muslim League and the Congress was a significant event. The League was led by the Rajah of Muhammadabad, Mazar-Ul-Haq, A. Rasul, and Jinnah.

The repression of the government was directed against the Home Rule movement. Heavy security was demanded from Besant's *New India* which was forfeited. In 1917, she was interned in Ootacamund. Her internment and that of other leaders like Wadia and Arundale made the Home Rule League popular and Jinnah joined it soon after.

Orders of externment were issued from the Punjab and Delhi against Tilak and Pal in 1917.

In 1918, the Liberals left the Congress and founded the Liberal Federation. It was due to the difference of opinion regarding the attitude to the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms which had been announced. The Liberals stood for working the Constitution under the new Reforms while the Congress at its 1918 session decided to boycott it.

Rise of Terrorist and Revolutionary Movements

Before proceeding to survey the main events of the next phases of the nationalist movement, it is necessary to describe briefly the terrorist and revolutionary movements which broke out in the first decade of the twentieth century.

The disillusionment about the efficacy of the programme and methods of the Liberals together with the study of the revolutionary movements of European nations for freedom and the methods of conspiratorial terrorism adopted by the Russian Nihilists and other European underground groups, influenced a section of the Indians to build up and operate like organizations and methods in India.

The political measures of the government during Curzon's rule and subsequent repression directed against the nationalist movement which drove even the Liberals to support the militant Boycott movement, exasperated this section into adopting the methods of political terrorism.

Their programme was comprised of political assassination generally of unpopular officials, hoping thereby to strike terror in the bureaucracy and break its will. They also thought that a campaign of political assassination, when carried out on a large scale, would even create a favourable atmosphere for armed insurrection.

Another item in their programme was to organize armed dacoities with a view to secure money from wealthy Indians and the government, which they could use for their work such as the establishment and operation of secret groups, laboratories to make bombs, factories to forge arms.

There sprang up also revolutionary groups which had a more extensive programme such as the fomenting of mutinies in the army and agrarian riots.

The main centres of these revolutionary and terrorist activities were Bengal, the Punjab, and Maharashtra. In Bengal there had developed considerable unemployment among the educated youth. This factor together with the emotional temperament of the Bengalis might explain why Bengal was the storm-centre of terrorism.

Revolutionaries and terrorists had established centres outside India also; in London, Paris, and New York.

We will now briefly narrate only the most important episodes and events connected with these movements.[58]

The assassination of Rand and Ayerst in Poona in 1897 has already been referred to.

Shyamji Krishnavarma established the Indian Home Rule Society in London in 1905 and India House at Highgate soon after. Both were revolutionary centres which prepared and smuggled revolutionary literature and arms into India. One of the pamphlets smuggled into India was *Bande-Mataram* which extolled the murder of Curzon Wyllie, an official of the India Office, by Dhingra, a member of India House, in 1909 and explained the role of political terrorism thus: 'Terrorize the officials, English and Indian, and the collapse of the whole machinery of oppression is not very far . . . This campaign of separate assassination is the best conceivable method of paralysing the bureaucracy and of arousing the people.'[59]

V. D. Savarkar was a close collaborator of Krishnavarma in England.

G. D. Savarkar, a brother of V. D. Savarkar who was in India, was sentenced to transportation for life for revolutionary activity. In the same year, Jackson, who had convicted Savarkar, was shot at Nasik. In the Nasik Conspiracy case in this connection, Kanhere was sentenced to death and twenty-seven other persons imprisoned. In 1909, an attempt on the life of Lord Minto, then the Viceroy, was organized.

In Bengal, the movement assumed serious dimensions. According to the Rowlatt Report, Anusilan Samiti, with its two main centres at Calcutta and Dacca and numerous nuclei throughout the province, was the rallying point of the terrorists. The Samiti distributed revolutionary literature and built underground groups.

Terrorist organizations were very active during the post-Partition years in Bengal. A number of police officials, magistrates, approvers, and sometimes even public prosecutors, lost their lives at the hands of the terrorists whose principal weapons were the bomb and the pistol. In the Alipore Conspiracy case, Gosain, an approver, as well as the public prosecutor and the superintendent of police associated with the case, were subsequently killed by the terrorists. There were a number of such conspiracy cases in the province, indicating thereby the great extent of the activity of revolutionary groups.

Some of the nationalist leaders like Aurobindo and Barindra Ghose were suspected of connection with the terrorist and revolutionary movements. Aurobindo was arrested in 1908 on a charge of conspiracy but was acquitted due to lack of evidence. He subsequently left the British territory and lived in Pondicherry.

Terrorism continued in Bengal even after the introduction of the Morley-Minto Reforms and the abolition of the Partition in 1911.

In the Punjab, revolutionary groups were formed in 1907. A good number of revolutionaries belonged to the Arya Samaj. A group of Muslims joined the movement after 1912.

Har Dayal, who had returned from Europe to India in 1910, organized revolutionary groups in the Punjab. He was mainly assisted in this work by Rash Behari and Amirchand. In 1911, Amirchand and others were arrested, tried, and hanged in connection with a bomb explosion in Lahore.

An attempt to assassinate Lord Hardinge, then the Viceroy, was made at Delhi.

generally of unpopular officials, hoping thereby to strike terror in the bureaucracy and break its will. They also thought that a campaign of political assassination, when carried out on a large scale, would even create a favourable atmosphere for armed insurrection.

Another item in their programme was to organize armed dacoities with a view to secure money from wealthy Indians and the government, which they could use for their work such as the establishment and operation of secret groups, laboratories to make bombs, factories to forge arms.

There sprang up also revolutionary groups which had a more extensive programme such as the fomenting of mutinies in the army and agrarian riots.

The main centres of these revolutionary and terrorist activities were Bengal, the Punjab, and Maharashtra. In Bengal there had developed considerable unemployment among the educated youth. This factor together with the emotional temperament of the Bengalis might explain why Bengal was the storm-centre of terrorism.

Revolutionaries and terrorists had established centres outside India also; in London, Paris, and New York.

We will now briefly narrate only the most important episodes and events connected with these movements.[58]

The assassination of Rand and Ayerst in Poona in 1897 has already been referred to.

Shyamji Krishnavarma established the Indian Home Rule Society in London in 1905 and India House at Highgate soon after. Both were revolutionary centres which prepared and smuggled revolutionary literature and arms into India. One of the pamphlets smuggled into India was *Bande-Mataram* which extolled the murder of Curzon Wyllie, an official of the India Office, by Dhingra, a member of India House, in 1909 and explained the role of political terrorism thus: 'Terrorize the officials, English and Indian, and the collapse of the whole machinery of oppression is not very far . . . This campaign of separate assassination is the best conceivable method of paralysing the bureaucracy and of arousing the people.'[59]

V. D. Savarkar was a close collaborator of Krishnavarma in England.

G. D. Savarkar, a brother of V. D. Savarkar who was in India, was sentenced to transportation for life for revolutionary activity. In the same year, Jackson, who had convicted Savarkar, was shot at Nasik. In the Nasik Conspiracy case in this connection, Kanhere was sentenced to death and twenty-seven other persons imprisoned. In 1909, an attempt on the life of Lord Minto, then the Viceroy, was organized.

In Bengal, the movement assumed serious dimensions. According to the Rowlatt Report, Anusilan Samiti, with its two main centres at Calcutta and Dacca and numerous nuclei throughout the province, was the rallying point of the terrorists. The Samiti distributed revolutionary literature and built underground groups.

Terrorist organizations were very active during the post-Partition years in Bengal. A number of police officials, magistrates, approvers, and sometimes even public prosecutors, lost their lives at the hands of the terrorists whose principal weapons were the bomb and the pistol. In the Alipore Conspiracy case, Gosain, an approver, as well as the public prosecutor and the superintendent of police associated with the case, were subsequently killed by the terrorists. There were a number of such conspiracy cases in the province, indicating thereby the great extent of the activity of revolutionary groups.

Some of the nationalist leaders like Aurobindo and Barindra Ghose were suspected of connection with the terrorist and revolutionary movements. Aurobindo was arrested in 1908 on a charge of conspiracy but was acquitted due to lack of evidence. He subsequently left the British territory and lived in Pondicherry.

Terrorism continued in Bengal even after the introduction of the Morley-Minto Reforms and the abolition of the Partition in 1911.

In the Punjab, revolutionary groups were formed in 1907. A good number of revolutionaries belonged to the Arya Samaj. A group of Muslims joined the movement after 1912.

Har Dayal, who had returned from Europe to India in 1910, organized revolutionary groups in the Punjab. He was mainly assisted in this work by Rash Behari and Amirchand. In 1911, Amirchand and others were arrested, tried, and hanged in connection with a bomb explosion in Lahore.

An attempt to assassinate Lord Hardinge, then the Viceroy, was made at Delhi.

After his arrival in America in 1911, Har Dayal built up revolutionary organizations there and launched a newspaper, *Ghadr* (Mutiny) in 1913 in San Francisco. The United States government arrested him in 1914. He was released on bail when, with Barkatulla, he escaped to Switzerland. After his departure, Ramchandra became the leader of the Ghadr movement.

The Ghadr group was agitating among the Indians in America against the immigration laws. In 1914, the 'Kamagata Maru', with a number of Indian passengers mainly Sikhs and Muslims, left Hongkong for Vancouver. When the ship reached Vancouver, the Canadian government refused permission to the passengers to land on the ground that they did not satisfy the conditions prescribed by the immigration laws of Canada. The ship was forcibly sent out of the harbour. Instead of Hongkong, the ship was taken to Calcutta where the government had kept a train ready to remove them directly after their landing to the Punjab. About three hundred Sikhs refused to proceed to the Punjab. In the police firing that followed eighteen were killed. Subsequently a number of the Sikhs were imprisoned. Those who returned to the Punjab did so in a spirit of resentment and, soon after, built revolutionary centres and organized revolutionary agitation among the people.

These revolutionary groups organized extensive revolutionary activities in the Punjab and even other provinces during 1914 and 1915. These included armed dacoities, killing of police officials and revolutionary propaganda among army units in the Punjab and military centres like Meerut and Cawnpore.

The government passed the Defence of India Act in 1915 which armed the authorities with powers to intern people. The government also appointed Special Tribunals which subsequently tried and sentenced twenty people to death, transported fifty-eight for life, and imprisoned fifty-eight for short terms.[60]

The revolutionary movement declined thereafter.

The Ghadr leaders had established a political liaison with the German consuls at New York and Shanghai. They succeeded in fomenting mutinies of a Baluch regiment in Rangoon and the 5th Light Infantry stationed at Singapore in 1915, which were put down.

Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report was published in 1918. The Reforms Act based on the Report was passed next year.

The Report introduced the system of 'Dyarchy' under which the subjects dealt by the Provincial Government were divided into two groups, 'transferred' and 'reserved'. The former was placed under the control of ministers intended to be responsible to an elected legislature. It included such subjects as local government, public health, education, etc.

The 'reserved' group including such subjects as finance, land revenue, police, and others remained outside the control of the ministers.

The main criticism of this aspect of the Reforms was that the subjects of most vital import were kept 'reserved' and even regarding 'transferred' subjects real advance in this sphere needed finance which was outside the control of the ministers.

The Report did not meet the demands of the Congress and the League embodied in the Congress-League Scheme such as the application of the principle of self-determination to India and immediate grant of self-government.

The Muslim League rejected the Report and reaffirmed the Congress-League Scheme in 1918.

The Indian National Congress held its session at the end of 1918 when it passed a resolution demanding the recognition of India as 'one of the progressive nations to whom the principle of self-determination should be applied'.

The Delhi Congress also passed a resolution demanding complete responsible government in India. It reaffirmed the Congress-League Scheme.

During and at the end of the war, considerable discontent had grown among the Indian people. The financial burdens of the war, the rise in prices, and profiteering, led to great economic distress among the mass of the people. The end of the war witnessed the outbreak of a virulent influenza epidemic which led to an appalling loss of life.

The post-war revolutions in Germany, Austria and Russia, which led to the overthrow of the powerful Hohenzollern, Hapsburg, and Romanoff dynasties, also had a galvanizing effect on the mind of the peoples of Asiatic countries. Widespread political ferment grew among these peoples including the Indians. Further, the Home Rule agitation of Tilak and others had increased the political consciousness of the people. The stage was set for a nationalist movement with a mass basis.

Since the Defence of India Act was to lapse after the end of the war, the Government of India brought the Rowlatt Bills in 1919, which gave the executive wide powers such as the power to imprison persons without trial and others. The Bills were met with universal opposition of the people. Gandhi threatened satyagraha if the Bills became law. The Bills were. in spite of popular opposition, enacted as law in March.

On 6 April, the day fixed by the leaders to express popular protest against the new law, there were hartals, demonstrations, and strikes, throughout the country.

> 'One noticeable feature of the general excitement was the unprecedented fraternization between the Hindus and the Moslems. Their union. between the leaders, had now for long been a fixed plan of the nationalist platform. In this time of public excitement even the lower classes agreed for once to forget their differences. Extraordinary scenes of fraternization occurred. Hindus publicly accepted water from the hands of Moslems and **vice versa.** Hindu-Moslem Unity was the watchword of processions indicated both by cries and by banners. Hindu leaders had actually been allowed to preach from the pulpit of a mosque.' **(India,** 1919.)

Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew, two leaders of the Congress in the Punjab, were removed to an unknown place by the authorities at Amritsar. This accentuated popular excitement and led to outbreaks of popular violence at Amritsar, Gujaranwalla, and Kasur.

There were disturbances in Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay. Ahmedabad, and other parts of India. The government's repression in the form of firing and imprisonment intensified.

Due to the outbreaks, Gandhi withdrew satyagraha.

Jallianwalla Bagh Tragedy

On 13 April, the tragedy of Jallianwalla Bagh took place at Amritsar. In the firing by the troops under the order of General Dyer at the unarmed people who had gathered at a peaceful meeting in the Bagh about 400 were killed and 1,200 wounded. This sent a thrill of horror among the people when it became known.

Martial law was promulgated in Lahore, Amritsar, and a number of districts in the Punjab on 15 April. Summary courts and Special Tribunals were appointed. Arrests, imprisonment, and executions on a big scale took place. Flogging was adopted as a form of punishment and in one street at Amritsar, the people, who passed through it, were made to crawl.[61]

The Martial Law regime continued till 11 June.

During the period, the Punjab was strictly isolated by a rigid censorship. News of the Jallianwalla Bagh reached England after a period of eight months.

Under the pressure of public demand, the Hunter Committee was appointed by the Government to inquire into the justification of firing at Jallianwalla Bagh. The Committee published its report in March 1920. The Report declared Dyer's action only as 'a grave error of judgement which exceeded the reasonable requirements of the case'. Montagu, the Secretary of State, supported this view and stated that the general was prompted by 'honesty of purpose and unflinching adherence to duty'.

The Report did not satisfy the people who had demanded the punishment of Dyer as well as other officials who had been putting down the movement in the Punjab with arbitrary imprisonments, firings, floggings, and such other methods. The Congress had already appointed a separate Committee which in its Report published in March enumerated various repressive actions of the government.

The year 1919 was marked by a phenomenal growth of the mass movement. Political demonstrations, hartals, and strikes were growing. The nationalist movement was acquiring for the first time a mass basis. Political discontent was rising among the people.

The Indian National Congress met at Amritsar at the end of 1919. Tilak stood for a policy of Responsive Co-operation. C. R. Das held the view that the Reforms must be rejected. Gandhi had described his attitude thus: 'The Reforms Act coupled with the proclamation is an earnest of the intention of the British people to do justice to India and it ought to remove suspicion on that score . . . Our duty, therefore, is not to subject the Reforms to carping criticism, but to settle down quietly to work so as to make them a success.'[62]

The compromise resolution passed at the Amritsar Congress said that 'The Reforms Act is inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing . . . that this Congress further urges that Parliament should take early steps to establish full Responsible Government in India in accordance with the principle of self-determination. Pending such introduction, this Congress trusts that, so far as may be possible, the people will so work the Reforms as to secure an early establishment of full Responsible Government . . .'

The political tension due to the 'unsatisfactory Reforms Act', the enactment of the Rowlatt Act, the Martial Law regime in the Punjab, and the general repressive policy of the government, was further aggravated in 1920 by what is known as the Khilafat question. The Indian Muslims were indignant at the terms of the Treaty of Sevres by which Turkey, a Muslim state, was deprived of its homelands such as Syria, Palestine, Arabia, and other Asiatic Zones of the Turkish Empire. They argued that their holy places were situated in these territories wherefore they should always be under the rule of the Sultan of Turkey who was also the Khalifa or the religious head of the Muslims all over the world.

Gandhi and other Congress leaders supported the Khilafat issue and allied with Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali in organizing a powerful Khilafat agitation in the country.

The terms of the Treaty of Sevres were published in May 1920. At a conference of various parties held at Allahabad in June, a committee comprised of Gandhi and prominent Muslim leaders was formed to formulate a programme of action.

The Khilafat issue drew the Muslims into the orbit of the national movement. 'The "Triveni" of the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs, and the invisible flow of inadequate Reforms . . . enriched both in volume and content the stream of national discontent. Everything was ripe for Non-Co-operation.'[63]

Tilak was not enthusiastic about the campaign of non-violent non-co-operation. He, however, did not oppose or 'hinder' it.[64]

Tilak died on 1 August 1920.

Epoch of Gandhi and Gandhism

The Non-Co-operation movement signalised the beginning of the next phase of the Indian nationalist movement. Gandhi was the outstanding leader and Gandhism the ruling ideology of the movement during this phase.

Gandhi dominated the political scene like a titan. His contribution to the nationalist movement was unique.

He was the first national leader who recognized the role of the masses and mass action in the struggle for national liberation in contrast to earlier leaders, who did not comprehend their decisive significance for making that struggle more effective.

Gandhi evolved a programme of struggle which would mobilize the masses in the nationalist movement and such that various sections of the people—workers, peasants, capitalists, students, lawyers and other professional classes, above all women—could actively participate in it. He, thereby, made, for the first time, the Indian nationalist movement a multi-class and mass nationalist movement in spite of its limitations due to his ideology. Under his leadership, the Indian people became heroic, patriotic and intrepid fighters for national emancipation. They in the mass courted jails and bravely faced firings and brutal lathi charges of the imperialist police and military. Gandhi, in spite of his compromising stand, instilled into them undying hatred for the "Satanic" British Government and an unquenchable thirst for Swaraj.

He provided the peasantry with the programme of the non-payment of land tax to the government thereby threatening to paralyse the financial basis of the latter. He exhorted the students to boycott the educational institutions, the source of supply of its administrative personnel. He called on the lawyers to desert the courts so that the judicial machinery of the state would be deadlocked. He called on the women to picket liquor and foreign cloth shops which they did in their thousands and, in the process, courted imprisonment. He asked the people as a whole to deliberately infringe the "lawless laws" framed by the government. Millions of Indians at his call marched in demonstrations and assembled at illegal rallies under the hailstorm of bullets and lathi charges.

It was a stirring spectacle, that of tens of thousands of women, who for centuries were chained to the narrow domestic life and whom an authoritarian social system had assigned the position of helots at home, stepping out in the streets and marching with their male fellow-patriots in illegal political demonstrations.

While taking over and utilizing such methods as the b
cott and swadeshi from the previous phase, Gandhi evol
new and far more effective techniques of struggle to ex
pressure on the British government. Satyagraha, Non-
operation, Civil Disobedience, both individual and on a m
scale, non-payment of taxes, open defiance of laws, delibe
courting of jails, mass demonstrations and marches, and h
ger strikes—these were the principal weapons he added to
armoury of the nationalist struggle.

Gandhi was not only a colossus in the field of politics,
was also an outstanding social reformer. He was permea
with profound humanism and was a crusader against injusti
in all spheres of social relations. He denounced in words
blazing moral indignation, the barbarous institution of unt
chability, the agelong crime of the Hindu society against
most oppressed section. He passionately struggled for
liquidation of this most inhuman institution and made it e
an integral part of his political programme.

He addressed powerful ethical appeals to the hig
classes of the Hindus and endeavoured to awaken their c
science against this infamy of ages.

Gandhi was a classical type of a nationalist and there
an anti-communalist par excellence. He considered both M
lim and Hindu communalisms as anti-national and anti-hu
and combated both these with all his indefatigable energy.
finally even "offered his life-blood as living oblation to
liquidation of communalism in the social relations of
Indian people."

Gandhi's interests were encyclopaedic and extended to
aspects of the life of the Indian nation. They embraced e
language and literature. He enriched Gujarati, his own ver
cular, popularized Hindi and left a powerful impress on lite
tures in various languages in the country.

With a view to implement this many-sided national p
gramme, Gandhi himself evolved and inspired others to evo
numerous centres to train cadres of self-sacrificing profess
workers. He also established a network of institutions, so
political, economic and educational, where those workers wo
carry out various programmes elaborated by him on the b
of the principles of what is popularly known as Gandhism

N.C.O. Movement

The Calcutta session of the Congress held in September 1920 passed a resolution adopting the programme of non-violent non-co-operation. Gandhi was entrusted with the leadership of the campaign because of his past experience of such struggles. The campaign was to be maintained till the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs were redressed and Swaraj established.

Gandhi based the political Satyagraha movement on moral and spiritual principles. He thus injected religion into politics which became thereby mystified. The criterion he adopted for determining the principles and programmes of a political movement was that of the strengthening of the spiritual stamina of the Indian people. He frequently talked of 'Soul Force', abstract 'Truth' (without defining what constitutes Truth), and the ethical conversion of the political opponent. When political programmes, instead of being based on a scientific analysis of objective forces, are deduced from abstract and even nebulous religious principles, they tend to lose charity of purpose, definiteness of objective, and rationality of methods.

The people responded to the call of the Congress. A big majority of voters refused to cast their vote in the elections held in 1920. Educational institutions were seriously affected by the voluntary withdrawal of the students. The boycott of law courts, however, did not meet with any tangible success.

It was during this period that educational institutions on independent national lines such as the National Muslim University of Aligarh, the Gujarat Vidyapith, the Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapith, the Bengal National University, the Kashi Vidyapith and the Bihar Vidyapith were organized.

The Congress held its ordinary session at Nagpur in December 1920. The programme was almost unanimously adopted. It substituted for the former aim of self-government within the Empire to be attained by constitutional means the new objective of 'the attainment of Swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means.'

The Non-Co-operation Movement, if ineffective, was to be followed up by mass Civil Disobedience. Regarding the latter, however, there was no clear plan or even definite objective.

"But mass disobedience was the thing that was [illegible] the people

What was it, what would it be? Gandhi himself never defined it, never elaborated it, never visualized it, even to himself. It must unfold itself to a discerning vision, to a pure heart, from step to step . . .'[66]

In addition to the Non-Co-operation Movement led by the Congress, there broke out other struggles in the country such as the strike of workers of the Assam-Bengal Railway, the no-tax campaign of the peasants in the Midnapore district, the Moplah rebellion in Malabar, and the struggle of the Akalis against their Mahants in the Punjab.

On 5 November 1921, the Working Committee and the all-India Congress Committee met at Delhi and decided to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement. It empowered every Provincial Committee to initiate on its own responsibility Civil Disobedience including the non-payment of taxes according to methods which it thought appropriate for the province. A set of conditions, however, were laid down, the fulfilment of which would make a person eligible for participation in the Civil Disobedience Movement.

It was during this period that the British government arranged the visit of the Prince of Wales to India. The Congress called upon the people to boycott the visit. The arrival of the Prince on 17 November was marked by a country-wide hartal and demonstrations. In a number of places, riots broke out. In Bombay, the outbreak continued for about four days. There were police firings and the total loss of life amounted to 53 killed and about 400 wounded.

Gandhi was alarmed at the outbreak of popular violence. He declared that Swaraj stank in his nostrils.

It was during this period that the national volunteers movement gathered momentum. Congress and Khilafat volunteers picketed foreign cloth shops and organized hartals. Even when their organizations were declared illegal, they maintained their activities and were arrested in large numbers.

The government had arrested and imprisoned almost all prominent leaders of the movement including C. R. Das, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Lala Lajpat Rai, and the Ali brothers, before the end of the year. Gandhi, alone, remained free.

The mass movement of the Indian people for Swaraj led by its bourgeois leadership had reached its climax when the

Indian National Congress held its session at Ahmedabad at the end of the year under the presidentship of Hakim Ajmal Khan in the absence of C. R. Das, the president-elect who was in prison.

The main resolution passed at the session said:

> ' . . . this Congress places on record the forced determination of the Congress to continue the programme of non-violent non-co-operation with greater vigour than hitherto . . . till the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs are redressed and Swaraj is established and the control of the Government of India passes into the hands of the people from that of an irresponsible corporation.
>
> 'This Congress trusts that every person of the age of 18 and over will immediately join the Volunteer Organizations.
>
> 'This Congress is of opinion that in order to concentrate attention upon Civil Disobedience, whether mass or individual under proper safeguards . . . all other Congress activities should be suspended whenever and wherever, and to the extent to which, it may be found necessary.
>
> ' . . . this Congress . . . hereby appoints Mahatma Gandhi as the sole Executive authority of the Congress.'

At the session, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, an outstanding Muslim leader in the Congress, desired to clarify and fix the political content of the term Swaraj. He wanted to interpret Swaraj as 'Complete Independence free from all foreign control'. Gandhi, however, opposed the suggestion. He remarked: 'The levity with which the proposition has been taken by some of you has grieved me. It has grieved me because it shows lack of responsibility.'[66]

The Ahmedabad Congress omitted any reference to the non-payment of taxes. Lord Reading interpreted this as a good omen.

> 'During Christmas week the Congress held its annual meeting at Ahmedabad. Gandhi had been deeply impressed with the rioting at Bombay . . . and the rioting had brought home to him the dangers of mass civil disobedience; and the resolutions of the Congress gave evidence of this. . . . whilst the organization of civil disobedience when fulfilment of the Delhi conditions had taken place was urged in them, they omitted any reference to the non-payment of taxes.'[67]

In the middle of January 1922, an All-Parties Conference attended by Jinnah, Jayakar, and others, and presided over by Sir M. Visvesvarayya was convened. Gandhi also attended it and explained the stand of the Congress. The conference condemned the repressive policy of the government. It advised the Congress to put off Civil Disobedience during the period of negotiations with the Viceroy. It put forth the proposal of a Round Table Conference with power to solve the problems of the Khilafat the Punjab, and Swaraj.

The Working Committee of the Congress announced on 17 January the putting off of Civil Disobedience till the end of the month.

The Viceroy, however, did not accept the suggestions of the All-Parties Conference. Gandhi consequently informed the Viceroy on 1 February that he had decided to start Civil Disobedience in the Bardoli district in Gujarat.

On 5 February, an outburst of violence took place at Chauri Chaura in the United Provinces. A crowd, mostly composed of peasants, attacked and set fire to a police station leading to the death of twenty-two policemen. Gandhi decided to drop the programme of Civil Disobedience. He convened a meeting of the Working Committee on 12 February at Bardoli, when a resolution was passed to the effect that due to the 'inhuman conduct of the mob at Chauri Chaura' the Civil Disobedience programme was suspended. The resolution further said: 'The Working Committee advises Congress workers and organizations to inform the peasants that withholding of rent payment to zemindars is contrary to the Congress resolutions and injurious to the best interests of the country.' It also assured 'the zemindars that the Congress movement is in no way intended to attack their legal rights, and that even where the ryots have grievances, the Committee desires that redress be sought by mutual consultation and arbitration' revealing thereby the anxiety of Gandhi and other Congress leaders to protect the basic rights of the landlord classes.

The Working Committee adopted 'a constructive programme' of items such as the popularization of the charkha, the propaganda of temperance, and the establishment of national educational institutions.

The Bardoli decision was intensely disliked by a number of Congress leaders who were in jail. 'To sound the order of retreat just when public enthusiasm was reaching the boiling point was nothing short of a national calamity. The principal lieutenants of the Mahatma, Deshbandhu Das, Pandit Motilal

Nehru and Lala Lajppt Rai, who were all in prison, shared the popular resentment. It was with the Deshbandhu at the time, and I could see that he was beside himself with anger and sorrow.'[68]

Pandit Motilal Nehru and Lala Lajpat Rai wrote to Gandhi from prison disapproving of his decision. 'They took Gandhi to task for punishing the whole country for the sins of a place. Why should, Panditji asked, a town at the foot of the Himalayas be penalized, if a village at Cape Comorin failed to observe non-violence?'[69]

On 13 March, Gandhi himself was arrested on a charge of sedition. He was tried and sentenced to six years' imprisonment. He was, however, released before the expiry of two years of the period of sentence.

The government's view of the situation in India as expressed by the Viceroy to the Secretary of State for India in *Telegraphic Correspondence, regarding the Situation in India* 9 February, Cmd. 1586, 1922, when the movement was withdrawn, is stated below:

> 'The lower classes in the towns have been seriously affected by the non-co-operation movement. In certain areas, the peasantry have been affected, particularly in parts of the Assam Valley, United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa and Bengal. As regards the Punjab, the Akali agitation . . . has penetrated to the rural Sikhs. A large proportion of the Mahomedan population throughout the country are embittered and sullen . . . grave possibilities. . . The Government of India are prepared for disorder of a more formidable nature than has in the past occurred and do not seek to minimize in any way the fact that great anxiety is caused by the situation.'

Withdrawal of N.C.O. Movement, Its Results

The Bardoli decision signalized the end of the Non-Co-operation Movement. The movement was distinguished from previous movements by its predominantly mass character. With sections of workers and peasants participating in it, the nationalist movement, which was restricted to the upper and middle classes till 1917, got a mass basis, for the first time, during the non-co-operation years. The workers and peasants, however, had not still developed distinct class or group consciousness when they could become independent political forces, evolve their own class leadership, programme, and even flag, and join the national movement. They followed the bourgeois leadership of the Congress during the Non-Co-operation Movement. This leadership, as the Bardoli resolution revealed, was closely aligned to the vested interests like the zemindari and was apprehensive of any mass movement which would jeopardize those interests.

Leaders like Lajpat Rai, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Subhas Bose, attributed the collapse of the movement, as we saw above, to the faulty strategy of Gandhi.

The programme of the movement did not include, except for the item of land tax, distinct economic demands of the masses such as increased wage and social legislation for the workers, and reduction of rent and debt for the agrarian population. The leadership did not take note of the fact that the political discontent of the masses had roots in their economic conditions and not in any abstract sentiment of nationalism.

The industrial bourgeoisie, which had gathered economic strength during the years of war as a result of industrial expansion, largely identified itself with and supported the Non-Co-operation Movement. From this time the industrial bourgeoisie exercised considerable and even decisive influence over the policies and programmes of the nationalist movement led by the Congress.

The nationalist movement declined after the Bardoli decision. The alliance of the Muslim League and the Congress was dissolved and the Hindu-Muslim unity built during the movement began to disintegrate.

Formation of Swaraj Party

The Swaraj Party with the programme of Council Entry was formed in 1923. Deshbandhu Das, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Vithalbhai Patel, who were already released, were the outstanding leaders of this party.

The Swaraj Party formulated as its aim the attainment of Dominion Status within the Empire. The party programme guaranteed the preservation of capitalism and landlordism by declaring that 'private and individual property will be recognized and maintained'. It declared that it would save labour from the exploitation of capital and capital from the unjust demands of labour. 'On the one hand, we must find out a way of organization by which we can prevent exploitation of labour by capitalists or landlords, but, on the other hand, we must be on our guard to see that these very organizations may not themselves be the source of oppression by nursing extravagant and unreasonable demands. Labour undoubtedly requires protection but so do industrial enterprises.'[70] The Swarajists subscribed to the doctrines of private property, class harmony, and identity of the interests of capital and labour.

The Swaraj Party shifted the centre of political activity inside the Councils. The constructive programme of the Congress did not satisfy it. The Party first declared its Council policy as that of wrecking legislatures from within. However, it steadily modified the policy. The Swarajists served on the government Steel Protection Committee in 1924 and on the Skeen Committee in 1925. The original policy of 'wrecking the legislatures from within' was progressively replaced by that of participation in and utilizing of the legislatures and even of readiness of co-operation with the government.[71]

The Swaraj Party voted for the Steel Protection Bill in the Central Legislature in 1924. The Bill granted a subsidy to the Tata Steel Company without, however, providing safeguards for the interests of the workers in the industry.

The Swaraj Party reached the climax of its strength in 1925 when the Congress handed over all its political work to the Party.

The Swaraj Party became the constitutionalist party of the Indian bourgeoisie which, after the tide of the nationalist mass movement had ebbed, desired to utilize the legislatures generally to press the programme of that class embodying demands such as free industrial expansion, development of heavy industries, and others.

Growth of Communal Tensions

Before proceeding further, a brief reference should be made to the growth of communal tensions and conflicts in the years following the Non-Co-operation Movement. The years of the movement were the years of the forging of the unity and even large-scale united action of the Hindu and Muslim communities. After the end of the movement, however, a contrary process set in. The reactionaries within both communities exploited the situation and began to create feelings of animosity between them. Both the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha took to belligerent communal propaganda. This had the effect of undermining national unity and national consciousness.

These two communal bodies were controlled by the landlords and other reactionary vested interessts within the communities. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru remarked: 'Hindu and Muslim communalism is, in neither case, even *bona fide* communalism, but political and social reaction hinding behind the communal mask.'[72]

There were a series of communal outbreaks during the period following the Non-Co-operation Movement. Communal clashes took place at Delhi, Gulbarga, Nagpur, Lucknow, Shahajanpur, Allahabad, Jubbulpore, and Kohat in 1924, and at Delhi, Calcutta, Allahabad, and other places in 1925. In subsequent years, too, communal outbreaks of various dimensions occurred in the country.

Growth of Socialist and Communist Ideas

The post-Non-Co-operation period witnessed another development of increasingly great significance in the history of Indian nationalist movement. It was the growth of socialist and communist groups and the rise of independent economic and political class organizations of the working class in the country.

The victory of the socialist revolution and the establishment of a socialist state in Russia had aroused interest in socialist and communist doctrines among the radical nationalists in India. A section of these, who were dissatisfied with the Gandhian ideology and Gandhi's constructive programme as well as the constitutionalism of the Swaraj Party, studied and embraced socialist ideology and began to evolve rival programmes of Indian Independence from the standpoint of the new ideology. The first socialist weekly, *The Socialist*, was started in Bombay by S. A. Dange in 1923. In 1924, the government arrested Dange, Muzaffar Ahmed, and sime others on a charge of conspiracy, and, in the Cawnpore Conspiracy case that followed, the accused were sentenced to four years' rigorous imprisonment. The growth of socialist ideas, though on a very small scale, was a new phenomenon in India.

Socialist ideas began to spread among the radical youths in subsequent years. Workers' and Peasants' Parties were formed in Bombay, Bengal, and the Punjab. The parties popularized the programme of national independence. They supported the economic and political demands of the workers and peasants and organized them on class lines for their class demands. Further they stood for direct action of the workers and of the peasants as the method of struggle to secure Independence.

The Workers' and Peasants' Parties built up trade unions and organized and led a number of strikes in the country. The Bombay Party built up in 1928 the Girni Kamgar Union with a membership of 65,000.

The Bombay textile workers' strike, the Bengal-Nagpur Railway strike, the South Indian Railway strike, and numerous other strikes which broke out in 1928, were mostly organized and led by the members of these parties.

It was during these years that the highly developed trade unions and socialist and communist parties of England sent to India a number of representatives such as Fenner Brockway, Spratt, Ben Bradley, and others, to assist the growth of the rising working class and nationalist movements. Spratt and Bradley were subsequently arrested, tried, and sentenced in the Meerut Conspiracy case, 1929.

From Boycott of Simon Commission to Lahore Congress

Discontent among the nationalist ranks began to rise steadily from 1926. A sense of futility regarding both the constructive programme of Gandhi and the constitutionalism of the Swaraj Party was growing.

The economic measures of the government such as the stabilizing the rupee ratio at 1s. 6d., the introduction of preferential rates for British steel in 1927, and others, created a strong feeling of resentment among the Indian bourgeoisie.

The appointment of the Simon Commission with a complete non-Indian personnel in 1927 accentuated the discontent of all political groups and parties.

The Madras Congress of 1927 met in the atmosphere of growing political discontent in the country. A Left Wing had grown within the Congress which was not satisfied with the goal of Dominion Status and desired to substitute Complete Independence for it. It also insisted on a programme of struggle.

The Madras Congress was a turning point in the history of the Congress. It, for the first time, declared Complete Independence as the aim of the Congress. It decided upon the boycott of the Simon Commission. It affiliated itself to the International League against Imperialism.

The Congress also supported the struggle of the Chinese people against the Japanese and other Imperialist powers.

Gandhi disapproved of the passing of the Independence Resolution at Madras describing it as 'hastily conceived and thoughtlessly passed'.

Adoption of Independence as the aim of the Congress implied also a reverse for the Swarajists whose programme amounted to Dominion Status within the Empire. Pandit Motilal Nehru had remarked just before the Congress met at Madras that 'The only result the present action of the Government is likely to lead to is to strengthen the hands of that growing body of Indians who are working for complete independence. I am afraid those who are still for full responsible Government within the Empire will find it difficult to maintain the majority which they undoubtedly have at present.'[73]

The year 1928-9 was marked by a phenomenal growth of the student and youth movement in the country, especially in Bombay and Bengal. Simultaneous to this, under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru, an All-India Independence League with branches in a number of centres was organized. These organizations supported the Independence demand and had radical programmes sympathizing with and supporting the demands and struggles of the masses. They generally stood for a national democratic programme based on independence, the abolition of States and the zemindari, and the improvement of the conditions of the masses. The student and youth organizations together with the Independence League and Workers' and Peasants' Parties played an important role in organizing the Simon Commission Boycott campaign.

The Statutory Commission reached India on 3 February 1928. As a protest, an all-India hartal was observed on that day. There were meetings and demonstrations in a number of places in the country.

Big demonstrations took place in Delhi, Lucknow, Madras, Calcutta, Patna, and other towns. There were clashes between the police and the demonstrators in a number of places.

At Lahore Lala Lajpat Rai was hurt by a lathi blow when the police tried to break up the gathering. Many believed that his death after a few months was mainly due to the injury received.

In February, an All-Parties Conference composed of the representatives of the right wing of the Congress such as Pandit Motilal Nehru, and the Liberal leaders like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Ali Imam, met. In August, the conference published a report known as the Nehru Report in which it outlined a scheme of a constitution for India. The scheme asked for a constitution based on that of a self-governing dominion. The Report also recognized 'all titles in private and personal property'.

The Socialist and Left nationalists criticized the scheme as abandoning the goal of independence and conserving zemindari and other reactionary propertied interests.

The year 1928-9 witnessed a series of strikes in the country. There was a general strike in the Bombay textile mills involving 150,000 workers. The strike was led by the Girni Kamgar Union and the Bombay Textile Labour Union.

The strike wave reached its peak in 1929 when 531,059 workers were involved in contrast to 131,655 workers involved in 1927.

The strike movement revealed the increasing class consciousness and militancy of the Indian working class. Further, the strikes were often (as in Bombay) led by the members of the Workers' and Peasants' Party, whose political influence was felt among the workers. The working class was beginning to develop into an independent social force.

The workers also exhibited their growing political consciousness by participating in political processions under their own flag. The workers participated, in large numbers, in the Simon Commission Boycott.

The Calcutta Congress met in December 1928. It became an arena of the political battle between the advocates of Dominion Status (as embodied in the Nehru Report) and the protagonists of immediate independence. Subhas Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru led the latter group. Gandhi attended the Congress session and brought all his influence to bear on the delegates to vote for a compromise resolution which asked the Congress to accept Dominion Status if it was granted within a year and, failing that, to launch a non-violent non-co-operation movement.

The amendment moved by Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru was defeated. The amendment said, 'The Congress adheres to the decision of the Madras Congress declaring Complete Independence to be the goal of the Indian people and is of opinion that there can be no true freedom till the British connection is severed.'[74]

The Calcutta Congress revealed the growing strength of the radical forces in the Congress.

The growing political consciousness of the working class was indicated by the fact that 50,000 workers of the Calcutta mills came in a procession, remained in the Congress pandal for about two hours, and passed a resolution for national independence.

The Workers' and Peasants' Party held its first all-India Conference during this period at Calcutta. It adopted a programme of complete independence, the abolition of native states and landlordism, the nationalization of key industries, an eight-hour working day, and other items.

In March 1929, the government arrested a number of leaders of the working class and national movements on a charge of conspiracy. The case, known as the Meerut Conspiracy Case, lasted for four years at the end of which, while some of the accused were acquitted, others were sentenced to long terms which, on appeal, were, however, substantially reduced. There were communists as well as non-communists among the accused who also included three Englishmen, Spratt, Bradley, and Hutchinson. Three of the accused were members of the All-India Congress Committee.

In the middle of 1929, the Viceroy issued the Public Safety Ordinance, which gave the Governor-General in Council power 'to remove from India British and foreign communist agents'.[75]

The Trade Dispute Act was passed in the same month which declared sympathetic strikes, strikes 'designed to coerce Government', and 'lightning strikes in public utility services' illegal.

The government took strong measures during the year 1929 against the movements which were developing. Ramananda Chatterjee, Editor of *The Modern Review*, was arrested for publishing *India in Bondage*. Bhagat Singh and Dutt were arrested and sentenced to transportation for life for throwing a bomb and propaganda leaflets in the Central Legislative Assembly while it was holding its session. In Calcutta, Subhas Bose and a number of leading Congressmen were arrested and tried on a political charge.

Bhagat Singh and Dutt, who were in the Lahore jail and had already been sentenced to transportation for life, were, while in jail, further charged with the murder of Mr. Saunders, the Superintendent of Police of Lahore. The case was known as the Lahore Conspiracy Case in which Dutt was acquitted and Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, and Rajguru were subsequently sentenced to death.

A number of political prisoners including the Lahore Conspiracy Case prisoners and Jatin Das went on hunger strike to secure better conditions for political prisoners. Jatin Das died at the end of 64 days' hunger strike. His death created a profound stir among the people.

In Burma, the Rev. Wisaya, who was in prison on a charge of sedition, went on hunger strike to secure better treatment. After 164 days of the hunger strike he died.

The political atmosphere in the country was growing increasingly tense.

On 31 October, Lord Irwin, the Viceroy, issued a statement in which he said: 'I am authorized on behalf of His Majesty's Government to state clearly that in their judgement, it is implicit in the declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status.'

The Viceroy's statement created a hope of political settlement among the Congress and non-Congress leaders. They met at Delhi and published a Manifesto (the Delhi Manifesto) in which, among other things, they said: 'We hope to be able to tender our co-operation to His Majesty's Government in their effort to evolve a scheme of Dominion Status suitable to India's needs.' To create conditions for the success of the proposed Round Table Conference, the Manifesto suggested that 'political prisoners should be granted an amnesty' and that the

Indian political parties must have effective representation at the Conference.

The Manifesto was signed by Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Mrs. Besant, Sir T. B. Sapru, and others.

It was considered anomalous for Jawaharlal to have signed the Manifesto since he stood for independence and no compromise. Subsequently, he declared the Manifesto a political error.

On 23 December 1929 Gandhi and Motilal Nehru representing the Congress, and Jinnah and Sapru representing the views of other political groups, met the Viceroy at Delhi. Gandhi asked for an assurance that the Round Table Conference should start its political labours on the basis of the recognition of full Dominion Status for India. The Viceroy pleaded his inability to give such assurance. This led to the breakdown of the negotiations.

Complete Independence, Declared Objective

The Congress met at Lahore in a tense political atmosphere.

The Lahore Congress defined Swaraj as Complete Independence. It empowered the All-India Congress Committee to launch Civil Disobedience including the non-payment of taxes when it considered proper.

Jawaharlal Nehru, in his presidential speech, declared himself a socialist and a republican. 'Independence for us means complete freedom from . . . British Imperialism.' Further, he remarked: 'The real thing is the conquest of power by whatever name it may be called. I do not think that any form of Dominion Status applicable to India will give us real power.'

The Lahore Congress became a prelude to another nationalist mass movement.

The Congress fixed 26 January of every year as Independence Day. It organized the first Independence Day celebration on 26 January 1930. There were extensive demonstrations and meetings throughout the country.

Gandhi published in Young India, on 30 January, Eleven Points which constituted a programme of demands such as total Prohibition, the reduction of ratio to 1*s.* 4*d.*, the reduction of land revenue at least by 50 per cent, the abolition of salt tax, protective tariff on foreign cloth, the passage of Coastal Tariff Reservation Bill, and others. He wrote, '. . . let the Viceroy satisfy us with regard to these very simple but vital needs of India. He will then hear no talk of Civil Disobedience; and the Congress will heartily participate in any Conference. . .'

The Eleven Points were criticized by the Left nationalists as a modification and reduction of the demand for independence to that for some reforms. The government, however, did not respond to the offer.

Civil Disobedience Movement

The Congress Committee met at Sabarmati in February and invested Gandhi 'and those working with him' with full authority to lead and direct the Civil Disobedience campaign.

Before launching the movement, Gandhi wanted to have full conviction that it would not directly or indirectly lead to the slightest violence. He was, however, of opinion that if a non-violent movement was not started, violent movements would break out in the country due to the impatience of the people for freedom. He expressed this view in his letter to the Viceroy on 2 March 1930: 'The party of violence is gaining ground and making itself felt. . . It is my purpose to set in motion that force (non-violence) as well against the organized violent force of the British rule as the unorganized violent force of the growing party in violence. To sit still would be to give rein to both the forces above mentioned.' This was Gandhi's estimate of the existing situation.

Finally Gandhi decided upon launching the struggle. He declared that, in the first stage, he would restrict the movement only to himself and seventy-nine carefully selected followers who would break the Salt Law of the government at Dandi on 6 April.

Gandhi and others who contravened the Salt Law were not arrested. It had, however, the effect of unleashing the forces in the country and precipitating unauthorized actions.

On 9 April, Gandhi formulated a programme for the movement thus: 'Let every village fetch or manufacture contraband salt, sisters should picket liquor shops, opium dens and foreign cloth dealers' shops. Young and old should spin . . . Foreign cloth should be burnt. Hindus should eschew untouchability. . . Let students leave Government schools and colleges and Government servants resign their service . . . and we shall soon find that Purna Swaraj will come knocking at our doors.'[70]

The Boycott of foreign cloth and liquor enforced by methods of picketing and propaganda met with success. Students, in considerable numbers, left educational institutions. The Congress Committees organized meetings in defiance of police ban and firings and lathi charges were resorted to by the police to break up the banned rallies.

Movements of other types also broke out in the country. A group of revolutionaries raided the police armoury at Chittagong in April. In May, in Sholapur, there were mass demonstrations during which clashes between the crowds and the police took place. A number of government buildings and liquor shops were destroyed. There were police firings which led to large casualities. Martial law was promulgated and troops were brought to suppress the outbreak.

Most serious developments, however, took place in Peshawar in April. The city witnessed a number of mass demonstrations during which clashes occurred between the crowds and the police. An armoured car was burnt by the demonstrators, and due to the police firing which ensued, a large number of persons were killed and wounded. One significant incident during the period was that a group of Indian soldiers belonging to the 18th Royal Garhwali Rifles, when ordered to fire on the crowd, refused to do so. They were subsequently court-martialled and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. Large forces were requisitioned and the city was finally brought under control.

On 5 May, the authorities arrested Gandhi. The arrest led to hartals, demonstrations, and strikes all over the country. There were disturbances in a number of places. The events at Sholapur described before were a sequel to Gandhi's arrest.

The government strengthened its measures. It issued a number of ordnances. In June, it proscribed the Congress and all its branches. Under the Press Ordinance, 67 newspapers and 55 printing presses had been closed down before the end of July.

Repression was intensifying. The number of political prisoners swelled to 90,000 during this period, according to the estimate of Pattabhi Sitaramayya, the Congress historian.

The government released Gandhi and other members of the Congress Working Committee in January 1931.

Gandhi-Irwin Pact

In March, after considerable negotiations, the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was concluded. Under the terms of Pact the government agreed to stop repression and release political prisoners excluding those convicted of violent offences. Gandhi, on his side, consented to withdraw the Civil Disobedience Movement and stood for the participation of the Congress in the Round Table Conference which would discuss a scheme for a constitution of India of which 'Federation is an essential part. So also are Indian responsibility and reservations or safeguards in the interests of India, for such matters as, for instance, Defence, External Affairs, the position of Minorities, the financial credit of India, and the discharge of obligations.'

The Left nationalists criticized the agreement and called it a compromise, a deviation from the objective of Independence for which the struggle was started.

The Karachi Congress, 1931, approved of the agreement. Though disagreeing, Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru voted for it to preserve national unity.

The Congress at this session also passed an important resolution on Fundamental Rights. It guaranteed civil liberties to every citizen. It stood for the nationalization of key industries and transport, better conditions of life and labour for the workers, far-reaching agrarian reforms, free and compulsory primary education, universal adult franchise, and other things.

Gandhi soon after sailed for England and attended the Round Table Conference. He made a number of statements on the Federation Scheme, on the problem of minorities, the army, and the safeguards, and explained the Congress position. He opposed communal electorates and, due to divergence of views on this question, the Conference broke up and the delegates returned to India.

The months during which Gandhi was absent were characterized by great agrarian discontent. The fall in the prices of agricultural commodities due to the agrarian crisis, a part of the world economic crisis which had broken out in 1929 and was still persisting, had brought about considerable economic distress among the Indian farmers. In the latter part of 1931, in some parts of the United Provinces, Gujarat, and Burma, sections of agriculturists had refused to pay rent and tax. The government accused the Congress of encouraging the farmers, thereby of breaking the terms of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. The Congress, on the other hand, declared that the government repression had not ceased in spite of the Pact.

Revival of C. D. Movement

Gandhi, soon after his return to India in December, asked Lord Willingdon, the new Viceroy, for an interview to discuss matters. The latter, however, declined.

The Congress decided to revive the Civil Disobedience Movement when negotiations between the Congress and the government finally broke down. Gandhi was arrested on 4 January 1932. The government immediately issued a number of ordinances such as the Emergency Powers Ordinances, the Unlawful Instigation Ordinance, the Prevention of Molestation and Boycotting Ordinance and the Unlawful Association Ordinance. The Congress organizations were banned. Practically all Congress leaders were arrested and the arrest of a large number of civil resisters took place. The government, under the powers provided by the Ordinances, confiscated the property of a number of organizations and took action against the section of the Press which supported the struggle.

The number of those arrested had reached, according to the estimate of the Congress, 120,000 in April 1933.

In addition to the Civil Disobedience developments, the year 1932 witnessed two other outbreaks, one in Kashmir and the other in Alwar, both native states ruled by autocratic princes. The revolt of the peasants in the Alwar state had economic roots, being the outcome of the exorbitant land revenue.

The revolt reached serious dimensions and was put down only with the aid of British troops.

Macdonald, the Prime Minister, announced in July the Communal Award creating separate electorates for the depressed classes and other minorities. Gandhi who was opposed to any separate electorate of the depressed classes went on 'a fast unto death'. It resulted in the Poona Pact which, while maintaining the joint Hindu electorate, reserved seats for the depressed classes. The number of the reserved seats exceeded that provided by the Award.

Gandhi embarked on another fast in May 1933. The fast was meant as a lever for the spiritual strengthening of himself and his co-workers so that they might better consecrate themselves to the cause of the uplift of the Harijans. The fast objectively played the role of diverting the attention of the people from the political struggle.

The government soon released Gandhi from prison. The Civil Disobedience Movement was suspended temporarily by the Congress President in the light of the fast and under the advice of Gandhi.

Lessons of C. D. Movement

The suspension was commented upon by Subhas Bose and Vithalbhai Patel who were in Europe at the time, in a joint manifesto they issued, thus: 'The latest action of Mr. Gandhi in suspending Civil Disibedience is a confession of failure . . . We are clearly of the opinion that Mr. Gandhi as a political leader has failed. The time has come for a radical reorganization of the Congress on a new principle, with a new method, for which, a new leader is essential.'[77]

The Congress, under Gandhi's advice, finally decided to wind-up mass Civil Disobedience in July.

The All-India Congress Committee officially wound-up Civil Disobedience, mass or individual, in May 1934, with the exception of Gandhi who was, however, free, if he chose, to practise it.

The government legalized all Congress organizations in June 1934 A number of youth leagues and other bodies remained, however, illegal.

Gandhi resigned his membership of the Congress soon as a result of sharpening differences between him and a section of the Congressmen.

Before withdrawing from the Congress organization. Gandhi influenced the Congress in introducing change in its constitution and organizational structure. This was due to the growing strength of the Left nationalist and socialist forces within the Congress. The number of members of the Congress provincial committees was diminished and methods of elections to higher committees changed to the disadvantage of the minority groups. The revision was rightly criticized by the Leftists as undemocratic.

The Federal Constitution was passed in Parliament in 1935. It was, however, in 1937 that its scheme of provincial autonomy was put into operation in India.

The Civil Disobedience Movement, the second nationalist mass struggle in the history of Indian nationalism, ended in 1934. It had a greater mass basis than the movement of 1920-21. It proved increased political awakening among the Indian people. The masses including the peasants were drawn into the nationalist struggle to a greater extent. They had also evolved their own independent political and economic organizations which was not the case in the first movement. The direction of the movement lay, however, with the bourgeois leadership of the Congress.

The bourgeois leadership headed by Gandhi, consistent with the Gandhian political ideology and its class affiliation, restricted the scope of the nationalist movement. It, as a rule, disapproved of the independent actions of the workers and peasants such as strikes and the non-payment of rents, etc. which they organized under their own class leadership and uncompromising political slogans and which injected vitality and effectiveness into the movement. The fear that these independent actions might get out of control and seriously jeopardize the Indian vested interests like the zemindari constantly haunted the bourgeois leaders and determined their attitude to them.* Further, Gandhi, as the publication of his Eleven Points showed, was always animated by a desire for compromise and settlement.

---

* Gandhi supported the existing economic structure of the Indian society based on capitalist private property and the zemindari and stood for its perpetuation. He did not think that exploitation was implicit in the existing social relations of production themselves, and the increased impoverishment of the masses the result of the inevitable working out of the laws governing the development of the economic structure. He believed that, given enough moral will among the capitalists and the

zemindars, the economic suffering of the masses could be eliminated.

'I shall be no party to dispossessing the propertied classes of their property without just cause. My objective is to reach your hearts and convert you so that you may hold all your private property in trust for your tenants and use it primarily for their welfare. . . . The Ram Rajya of my dream ensures the rights alike of prince and pauper. You may be sure that I shall throw the whole weight of my influence in preventing a class war. . . . Supposing that there is an attempt unjustly to deprive you of your property you will find me fighting on your side. . . . Our Socialism or Communism should be based on non-violence, and on the harmonious co-operation of labour and capital, the landlord and tenant.' (Gandhi's statement to the U. P. landlords in July, 1934, published in *Maratha*, 12 August 1934.)

The failure of the movement engendered a feeling of despondency in the nationalist ranks. The Congress membership declined to about half a million at the end of 1936.

Limitations of Gandhi and Gandhism

Indian Nationalism found its highest expression in Gandhi. However, as an editorial of "New Perspective" observes: "Due to his social origin and all earlier experiences and influences, though he developed a progressive nationalist outlook, ideologically he could not transcend the bourgeois limitations of that outlook.

"Subjectively he incarnated the very spirit of nationalism, its profound hatred of foreign enslavement and heroic will and determination to end that enslavement. The consciousness of Gandhi, the nationalist of the classical type, was also completely free from even the faintest trace of provincial particularism or communalism.

"The texture of Gandhi's consciousness was essentially bourgeois and, therefore, his nationalism was governed by a bourgeois class outlook. What does this signify? It means that his conceptions of Imperialism, of struggle against Imperialism, of the methods of that struggle, of national independence, were determined by that class outlook."

The ideology of Gandhi, its political theory, economic doctrine, and ethical views, arose out of the historical needs of the national bourgeoisie. Since the national bourgeoisie was in objective opposition to imperialism which did not permit free industrialization and general economic development of the

Indian society, it played a progressive role. Gandhism had therefore a progressive content too. But the economic dependence of the national bourgeoisie on imperialism, on foreign finance capital, and further, its economic interlocking with landed interests, compelled it to compromise with imperialism and feudalism. There was also the perennial fear of the mass movement which might also challenge native capitalism. This transformed the national bourgeoisie into an anti-revolutionary and yet reformist oppositional social force.

Gandhism met both the needs of the national bourgeoisie viz. that of exerting pressure on imperialism through mass struggle and, second, that of limiting that struggle, diverting it in those channels which also would make it harmful for Indian propertied classes.

Gandhi felt convinced that a happy prosperous national existence could be built up on the basis of a capitalist social system. This was due to the class limitation of his world outlook. Indian capitalism was not a young capitalism with a prosperous future in front of it. It was a feeble part of the declining world capitalism. It had no markets and colonies as sources of super-profits. In competitive struggle with giant capitalisms of U.S.A., Britain and others, it had little prospect of success. It lived a precarious existence. It was denied the privilege of giving decent standards to the working masses since its revenue was limited.

Gandhi, however, due to class inhibition, was unable to grasp this objective historical fact. He did not realize that the laws of competitive capitalist economy were objective laws. There is no free will for capitalists. Their practice in the economic field is dictated to by the exigencies of competitive economic struggle under capitalism. Class struggle emerges out of the capitalist social soil.

Gandhi due to his class inhibition could not transcend the bourgeois outlook and therefore was unable to see the social roots of wars, exploitation and oppression and attributed them to man's weak ethical nature. Instead of a radical transformation of the social structure as the solution of the world's ills, he gave the recipe of the "change of heart" theory as the panacea of those ills. Not that the social system should be changed but the human heart must experience a fundamental moral transformation. Instead of working for a programme of substituting socialist social relations in place of capitalist social relations, he strove for humanizing capitalist social relations, which had intrinsic exploitative essence and character and could not, therefore, be humanized. He could not discover in the class structure of society the origin of social ills but in the ethical degradation of man which the capitalist social system itself engendered.

The bourgeois consciousness of Gandhi should not, however, be confounded or identified with the sordid consciousness of an ordinary bourgeois. Gandhi was a bourgeois only in the sense that he sincerely believed in the validity of the existing society based on capitalist property system, alternative to which he saw social chaos. Gandhi recognized and denounced in burning words the barbarities of capitalist exploitation but could not transcend his essential bourbeois outlook. Gandhi loved the masses but also believed in the bourgeois social system. He indefatigably worked to alleviate the conditions of the masses within the framework of that system, a task which could not be accomplished because historically speaking, there was no economic basis for implementing programmes of humanism or reformism in the era of the general decline of the world capitalist system, especially in a country like India where no prosperous capitalism could evolve. "There emerges in such a phase the painful spectacle of a noble humanist engaged in making ineffectual attempts to alleviate the misery of the masses while becoming, at the same time, a consistent opponent of all attempts of the masses to change the society since he sincerely believes in the validity and immutability of that social system. The noble humanist, who is unable to recognize the reactionary nature of the declining social system, becomes the opponent of a historically needed social transformation."

Though, as stated before, Gandhi was an anti-communalist par excellence and struggled for achieving Hindu-Muslim unity, in tragic reality, the Hindu-Muslim antagonism, instead of decreasing, became accentuated from stage to stage.

This was due to his inability to trace the socio-historical genesis of that antagonism. He discovered its origin "not in the material life processes of Indian society but in the weak ethical structure of the people. In fact, historically, the communalism of the Muslim masses was the distorted ugly expression of their large scale economic discontent born of exploitation by capitalists, landlords, money-lenders and merchants who, in India, happened to be composed predominantly of Hindus. The economically weak Muslim upper classes, in their struggle against their powerful rivals who happened to be Hindu, gave a communal turn to this class discontent of the Muslim masses. This was the origin of Muslim communalism."

When such was the genesis of Muslim communalism, the only decisive method to counteract it was to unite the Indian masses, both Hindu and Muslim, on the basis of their own common economic interests and lead them against Indian vested interests, both Hindu and Muslim. Thus alone, the Muslim communalists could have been isolated from the Muslim masses. "Gandhi made heroic endeavours to end communalism, for three decades, by means such as passionate patriotic appeals, noble soundings of man's human depths, frequent fasts and others. Communalism grew upgrade."

The nationalist movement led by Gandhi and governed by Gandhian ideology thus became a peculiar blend of bold advances followed by sudden and capricious halts, challenges succeeded by unwarranted compromises, resulting in uncertainties, confusion and befogging of perspective of the masses.

This, paradoxically, strengthened the very reactionary tendencies which Gandhi wanted to eliminate.

Rise of Radical Organizations

From 1936, the nationalist movement took an upward swing. Jawaharlal Nehru, presiding over the Lucknow Congress, exhorted the delegates to adopt a programme of the united front of all forces of national freedom. He recommended the affiliation of trade union and peasant organizations (kisan sabhas which had already sprung up in the country) to the Congress so that the mass basis of the nationalist movement led by the Congress might be consolidated. The proposal for collective affiliation was, however, defeated at the Congress but a Mass Contact Committee was formed.

A number of radical organizations had sprung up by this time. Within the Congress, the Socialist Party on an all-India basis was formed. Outside the Congress, kisan organizations with a programme of the abolition of landlordism and immediate demands for the reduction of land tax, rent, and debts, had been organized under the leadership of Swami Sahajanand, Professor Ranga and Indulal Yagnik. The influence of these forces was reflected in the decisions of the Lucknow Congress.

The Congress, at its Lucknow session in April 1936, decided to participate in the elections which were to be held in 1937 under the New Constitution. It held its session again in December of the same year. The Resolution passed declared "its entire rejection of the Government of India Act of 1935 and the constitution that has been imposed on India against the declared will of the people'. It further said, 'The Congress stands for a genuine democratic state. . . . Such a state can only come into existence through a Constituent Assembly, elected by adult suffrage, and having the power to determine finally the Constitution of the country. To this end the Congress works in the country and organizes the masses and this objective must ever be kept in view by the representatives of the Congress in the legislatures. . . .'

The Election Manifesto of the Congress embodied demands for civil liberties and equal rights of citizens. It also declared that 'it stands for a reform of the system of land tenure and revenue and rent, and an equitable adjustment of the burden on agricultural land, giving immediate relief to the smaller peasantry by a substantial reduction of agricultural rent and revenue . . . and exempting uneconomic holdings from payment of rent and revenue'. The Manifesto also stood for an inquiry into peasant debts and their substantial reduction.

For the industrial workers the Manifesto announced a programme of a proper standard of living, hours and conditions of work, and social legislation. It also stood for 'the right of workers to form unions and to strike for the protection of their interests'.

The Manifesto also declared that it stood for the abolition of sex inequalities in social, economic, and all other spheres. It stood for the abolition of untouchability and the uplift of backward classes

The Manifesto promised encouragement to khadi and the village industries and protection to the large industries without prejudicing the interests of the former.

With this programme and the prestige of the Congress which had inaugurated and led great national movements in the past, the Election Manifesto had a great appeal. The Congress scored a big victory in the elections.

The Congress secured decisive majorities in Bombay, Madras, the United Provinces, Central Provinces, Bihar, and Orissa. It emerged as the most powerful party in Bengal and Assam in the elections.

Congress Ministries in Provinces

In March 1937, the All-India Congress Committee decided that the Congress should accept offices in the provinces where it commanded a majority in the legislature, 'provided that ministership shall not be accepted unless the leader of the Congress Party in the legislature is satisfied and able to state publicly that the Governor will not use his special powers of interference or set aside the office of Ministers in regard to their constitutional activities'. There was a minority opposition from the socialists and some Left nationalists to the resolution of office acceptance.

For some time, interim ministries composed of the members of other parties functioned in the provinces where the Congress had majorities in the legislatures. The Viceroy announced on 22 June that Governors would generally act so as 'not merely not to provoke conflicts with their Ministers to whatever party their Ministers belong, but to leave nothing undone to avoid or resolve such conflicts'. In light of this declaration, the Congress decided to form ministries.

Congress ministries were soon after formed in Bombay, Madras, Bihar, United Provinces, Orissa, and Central Provinces. Later on, a Congress ministry was formed in the North-West Frontier Province since the Congress, with the aid of a number of non-Congress members who agreed to abide by the Congress discipline, secured a majority support.

The Congress ministries, soon after they were installed, released political prisoners. They legalized a number of organizations which were prohibited. They cancelled internment and deportation orders imposed on political workers. They returned securities to a number of newspapers.

Soon after, however, the Congress governments became targets of criticism by the Left nationalists, socialists and leaders of labour and peasant movements, for restricting civil liberties and adopting repressive measures.

The Criminal Law Amendment Act had always been branded by the Congress as an oppressive piece of legislation. The critics pointed out that the Congress ministry in Madras, with the support of Rajagopalachari, had been making use of the Act against anti-Hindu agitation. The critics resented when Gandhi also supported its use. Gandhi wrote in *Harijan*: 'I have never studied the Act but I see from Rajaji's public declaration that it contains fair sections which suit the new situation that the Congress is facing. If such is the case, Rajaji will be foolish if he does not make use of them.'

Batliwala, a prominent socialist, was banished from Madras.

In Bombay, the Bombay Trade Disputes Act was enacted under the Congress government in 1938. The Act restricted the freedom of strike and laid down rules for the registration of trade unions which the labour leaders considered advantageous to the unions sponsored by the employers. The Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress organized a protest strike. In the firing by the police that took place, one person was killed and a number of others were wounded.

The Election Manifesto had guaranteed the workers' right to strike and its curtailment by the Congress government was criticized as a breach of the promise embodied in the Election Manifesto. The police firing was also condemned.

The Congress government promulgated section 144 and others in Ahmedabad when the workers went on strike. In Sholapur, a number of labour leaders were arrested on the 'Release of Political Prisoners Day' when they organized a demonstration. Some of them were subsequently tried and imprisoned.

The Congress government of the North-West Frontier Province was also criticized for making use of the Criminal Law Amendment Act when the peasants launched a struggle against the Raja of Toru.

Swami Sahajanand, the president of the All-India Kisan Sabha, published a pamphlet *The Other Side of the Shield* (A Reply to Babu Rajendra Prasad) in which he strongly criticized the Congress government in Bihar for not implementing the promises made before the elections and for using repression against the Kisan Movement.

Dr. Menon, Secretary, Indian Civil Liberties Union, stated in *Civil Liberties Under Provincial Autonomy*:

> 'It must however be asserted that the major repressive laws . . . still remain on the Statute Books. The Criminal Law Amendment Act is one such. . . .
>
> 'The Punjab Government has been the worst sinner in the use of this Act. In 1937, there were 24 prosecutions under this Act in the Punjab. . . . Bengal comes next.
>
> 'Both these provinces, however, are beaten in sheer numbers, in the use of this Act by the Congress government of Madras.
>
> 'The Bombay government promulgated the C.L.A. Act at Ahmedabad in connexion with the strike in the textile industry in that city. The Act was used at Sholapur also.'

The ministries could not make and implement big programmes of social legislation due to insufficient finance. Regarding the agriculturists, the Congress government introduced some measures which, however, were very inadequate. The Bombay Tenancy Bill of the Congress government, as the statement prefixed to the Bill said, affected only four per cent of the tenants. Very little was done for the agricultural labourers.

The dissatisfaction of the agriculturists was revealed in the growth of peasant unions in the country and their strong criticism of Congress governments as not fulfilling their pledges.

The Congress Ministries were also criticized for working the Provincial Autonomy part of the new Constitution contrary to what was stated in the Election Manifesto. This criticism came from the Left wing of the Congress.

Another new development after 1935 was the growing political consciousness among the people of the Indian states. Prajamandals or peoples' organizations developed in a number of those states. In course of time, the All-India States' Peoples' Conference was organized which integrated most of these organizations. The programme of these bodies included demands for civil liberties, representative institutions, the improvement of the conditions of the peasantry, the abolition of forced labour and the removal of state monopolies. Leaders of the Indian National Congress like Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru took great and even active interest in the movements of the people of the states and their organizations.

The Congress met at Haripura in 1938 and passed a resolution which stated the following:

> 'The Congress reiterates its condemnation of the proposed Federal scheme and calls upon the Provincial and Local Congress Committees and the people generally, as well as the Provincial Governments and Ministries, to prevent its inaguration. In the event of an attempt being made to impose it despite the declared will of the people, such an attempt must be combated in every way, and the Provincial Governments and Ministries must refuse to co-operate with it. In case such a contingency arises, the All-India Congress Committee is authorized and directed to determine the line of action to be pursued in this regard.'

Rift between Gandhi and Subhas Bose

The cleavage between the Right and Left wings of the Congress was deepening, especially during the period of Congress ministries.

Subhas Chandra Bose stood for the Congress presidential election in 1939. He forwarded a programme of a comprehensive country-wide struggle against Federation. He strongly criticized the policies and the political practices of the Right wing Congress leadership.

Bose had the support of the Socialist Party, the Communists and the radical section of the Congress.

Gandhi supported the candidature of Pattabhi Sitaramayya, a veteran and outstanding Right wing leader.

Bose was elected by 1,575 against 1,376 votes as the President of the next Congress to be held at Tripuri.

Bose's success was an indication of the rapid growth of radical forces in the Congress as also of the dissatisfaction growing against the policies of the Right wing leadership.

As a sequel to Bose's election, twelve out of fifteen members of the Working Committee resigned.

The Tripuri Congress (1939) passed a resolution on the 'National Demand' rejecting the Federal Scheme. It declared that the Congress would organize a struggle against it if introduced.

Another resolution expressed confidence in Gandhi's leadership and laid down that the President should nominate the Working Committee consonant with Gandhi's wishes.

This resolution gave Gandhi supreme power.

Bose and Gandhi could not reach an agreement about the formation of the Working Committee. As a result, Bose resigned. Rajendra Prasad was elected in his place.

Bose subsequently formed the Forward Bloc.

The All-India Congress Committee met in May and passed resolutions which made the Congress constitution more rigid, reduced the powers of Provincial Congress Committees to exercise control over the Congress ministries and prevented the members of the Congress from starting direct action without the consent of the Congress Committees. This made it impossible for Congressmen to organize any struggle against the wishes of the official Congress leadership.

The left groups organized protest action against this decision of the Congress dominated by the Right wing leadership to stifle their freedom of action. Bose was charged with breaking the discipline of the Congress for this and had to resign his presidentship of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.

The Congress had rejected the Federal Scheme and declared its decision to organize a mass struggle if it was inaugurated. Radical forces were growing within and outside the Congress. The movements of the workers and the kisans were steadily developing. The democratic and anti-feudal struggle of the people of the states was extending.

When the country was witnessing these developments, the World War II broke out.

Due to the exigencies of space as well as due to the fact that the main object of this book is to portray the social background and the social-genetic causes of the rise of Indian Nationalism and not to write a complete history of political nationalism, we will onclude our study here.

References

1 Refer W. Roy Smith.
2 Quoted by Buch (2), pp. 14-5.
3 Refer Kaye and Malleson.
4 Joan Beauchamp, p. 35.
5 ibid., p. 35.
6 R. P. Dutt, p. 274.
7 Refer Kaye and Malleson, Wintringham, Dutt and Krishna.

8 Hans Kohn, p. 359.
9 Refer Jawaharlal Nehru, Brailsford, and Chudgar.
10 Karl Marx, p. 55.
11 Temple, p. 78.
12 Refer Thompson and Garratt, p. 492.
13 ibid., p. 493.
14 Refer John Stuart Mill, Hans Kohn.
15 Buch, p. 151.
16 Sir G. Arthur, p. 177.
17 Hans Kohn, p. 360
18 Sir William Wedderburn, p. 101.
19 R. P. Dutt, p. 279.
20 Quoted by Sir William Wedderburn, p. 77.
21 Quoted in Buch, p. 170.
22 Andrews and Mookerjee, pp. 128-9.
23 Refer Pattabhi Sitaramayya, pp. 26-7.
24 Annie Besant, p. 7.
25 Quoted by Kellock, p. 120.
26 Surendranath Bannerji, pp. 94-5.
27 ibid., pp. 315-16.
28 *Congress Presidential Addressses*, First Series, pp. 254-5.
29 *Congress Presidential Addresses*, First Series, pp. 7-8.
30 Pherozshah Mehta quoted by R. P. Dutt, p. 288.
31 R. C. Dutt, p. xviii.
32 Gokhale, pp. 1005-6.
33 Refer Pattabhi Sitaramayya, pp. 94-5.
34 ibid., p.,109.
35 ibid., p. 109.
36 Ronaldshay, Vol. II, p. 151.
37 Quoted by Pattabhi Sitaramayya, pp. 112-13.
38 *Congress Presidential Addresses*, Second Series, p. 12.
39 ibid., p. 167.
40 *Congress Presidential Addresses*, First Series, pp. 738-9.
41 Pattabhi Sitaramayya, p. 11.
42 B. C. Pal quoted by Buch (2), p. 103.
43 B. C. Pal, p. 36.
44 Quoted by Buch (2), p. 144.
45 ibid., p. 45.
46 ibid., pp. 145-6.
47 ibid., pp. 127-8.
48 ibid., p. 146.
49 R. P. Dutt, p. 292.
50 Jawaharlal Nehru, pp. 23-4.
51 R. P. Dutt, p. 418.
52 ibid., p. 416.
53 Tilak quoted by Buch (2), p. 28.
54 ibid., p. 29.
55 ibid., pp. 34-5.
56 ibid., p. 49.

57 Quoted by Pattabhi Sitaramayya, pp. 164-5.

58 The whole information is mainly based on the Rowlatt Committee's Report.

59 W. Roy Smith, pp. 63-4.

60 Refer W. Roy Smith, p. 80.

61 Refer Pattabhi Sitaramayya, p. 280.

62 *Young India*, 31 December 1919.

63 Pattabhi Sitaramayya, p. 335.

64 ibid., p. 331.

65 ibid., p. 331.

66 Quoted by Pattabhi Sitaramayya, p. 384.

67 Lord Reading, *Telegraphic Correspondence Regarding the Situation in India*, Cmd. 1586, 1922.

68 Subhas Bose, p. 90.

69 Pattabhi Sitaramayya, pp. 399-400.

70 Swarajist Statement quoted by Pattabhi Sitaramayya, p. 462.

71 Refer Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

72 Jawaharlal Nehru, p. 459.

73 Quoted by Joan Beauchamp, p. 185.

74 Quoted by Pattabhi Sitaramayya, p. 560.

75 *Government of India Report, India* 1928-9.

76 Gandhi quoted by R. P. Dutt, p. 331.

77 Quoted by R. P. Dutt, p. 342.

CHAPTER XIX

PROBLEM OF NATIONALITIES AND MINORITIES

Problem of Nationalities and Minorities in India

THE PROBLEM of nationalities and minorities was one of the outstanding problems of the Indian nationalist movement.

With the growing political awakening among such nationality groups as the Andhras, the Malayalis, the Karnatakis, the Maharashtrians, the Baluchis and others, and such minority groups as the Indian Muslims, the Sikhs, the depressed classes and others, the problem assumed decisive significance, both from the standpoint of the united national movement for political independence as also from that of the character of the future state structure of post-independent India.

The problem of nationalities and minorities was not a unique problem of Indian nationalism. Such a problem *did* emerge and demanded solution in the history of a number of modern peoples such as the Austrians, the Hungarians, the Russians, and others.

It is not that every modern people was confronted by their historical development with the problem of nationalities. For instance, such peoples as the English and the French had not to confront such a problem on the road to their consolidation as nations and during their subsequent triumphant and full-fledged existence as nations. In contrast to this, the peoples of the East European countries like the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Balkans, and others, had to confront this problem.[1] There are specific historical reasons for this distinction.

Genetic Causes of Rise of Nationalities

A survey of the historical development of modern nations reveals the crucial fact that they are product of the capitalist development of society. The extending process of the capitalist eonomic development overcomes the economic, social, and political disunity of a people, unifies them within a single political and economic system, and welds them into a cohesive nation.

> 'The closer connexion between different parts of a country, different sections of the population, arises with modern capitalism. This is a powerful integrating force breaking down the barriers of feudalism, concentrating large masses in big industrial centres, connecting the countryside with the town, producing the middle class which becomes in the beginning the main representative of the new idea of nationality. Therefore the origin of modern nations is closely connected with the bourgeois-democratic revolutions, which destroyed feudal seclusion and dispersion and for the first time united vast popular masses in a common struggle with common ideas. In this way the British nation arose from the revolution of the seventeenth century, the French nation from the great Revolution of 1789.'[2]

In countries where the process of economic and resultant linguistic and cultural consolidation of loosely existing peoples into united and compact nations preceded the establishment of centralized national states, no appreciable problem of nationalities and minorities emerged. On the contrary, in countries where, due to historical reasons, a centralized state came into existence before the loose mass of tribes or peoples, whom it governed, was transmuted into a well-knit nation living a common economic life and feeling a common cultural impulse as a result of the unifying power of the capitalist economic development, the problem of nationalities and national minorities *did* arise in the course of historical development.

This historical fact is succinctly summed up and illustrated by Stalin as follows:

> Modern nations are a product of a definite epoch—the epoch of rising capitalism. The process of the abolition of feudalism and the development of capitalism was also the process of formation of peoples into nations. The British, French, Germans, and Italians formed into nations during the victorious march of capitalism and its triumph over feudal disunity.
>
> 'Where the formation of nations on the whole coincided in time with the formation of centralized states, the nations naturally became invested in a state integument and developed into independent bourgeois national states. Such was the case with Great Britain (without Ireland), France

> and Italy. In Eastern Europe, on the other hand, the formation of centralized states, accelerated by the exigencies of self-defence (against the invasions of the Turks, Mongols and others), took place prior to the break up of feudalism, and therefore prior to the formation of nations. Here as a result, the nations did not and could not develop into national states, but formed into several mixed multi-national bourgeois states. . . . Such are Austria, Hungary and Russia.'[3]

As a result of further economic and other developments as well as political, economic, and cultural oppression by the dominant nationality, nationality consciousness grew among the various peoples in the countries of these multi-national states.[4] These suppressed, but now economically consolidated and conscious nationalities, occupying definite territorial zones, started movements for political freedom and even sovereign state existence.

Similarly minorities, religious (as the Jews) or ethnic, interspersed over the territory of a state, when they became conscious, started movements with the demand of proper safeguards for religious freedom, the free development of their language and culture, etc.

Nation and National Minority, Their Differences

A nation is distinguished from the national minority by the fact that its members occupy a definite territory, usually speak one language, above all live a common economic life, and further have a common psychological structure expressed through its culture.

> 'A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture.'[5]

The members of a nation may profess different religions but that will not affect their basic nationhood, because 'Religion is not a lasting factor. "Petrified religious rites and fading psychological relics" are modified by "the living social, economic, and cultural environment," that surrounds them.'[6]

Thus, the British, though composed of the protestants and the catholics, not to speak of groups of materialists, agnostics or theosophists, constitute a nation.

The members of a national minority, such as the Indian Muslims and the depressed classes, are interspersed over the entire state territory. They are geneally united by a common religion or labour under some common specific social grievance, when democratic conditions do not prevail. However, they do not constitute separate distinct nations, since all their members do not inhabit a common territory and do not live a common economic life. In fact, separate portions of them form parts of various nationality groups which inhabit various territorial zones, speak diverse languages, and have common economic and even social and cultural life.

Indian Nationalist Movement, Its Peculiarities

The process of the transformation of the physically, socially, economically, politically, and culturally disunited Indian people of the pre-British era into a more or less well-knit modern nation, did not follow the same route as in the case of the English or the French people. Indian nationalism grew under the conditions of foreign conquest and colonial rule. It was British capitalism which, by economic and political means, crippled Indian feudalism, economically unified India through the introduction of capitalist economic forms, established modern means of communications so vital for an all-sided development and consolidation of a loose medieval people into a modern nation, and, further, brought the Indian people under the rule of a single centralized state.[7]

However, since this transformation of the Indian society was motivated by the interests of foreign capitalism, and adjusted, in character, extent, and depth, to the exigencies of these interests, it remained incomplete and even distorted. While this transformation provided the objective basis for the rise of the Indian nation out of an inchoate medieval community, its incomplete character prevented the forging of the Indian people into as compact a nation as the English or the French.

While the national states which came into existence in those European countries as a result of victory over feudalism, almost abolished all feudal remnants in the social and economic life of their nations and, further, energetically assisted their free and rapid economic and cultural development, the

British government in India, as we have seen, perpetuated feudal relics and generally supported the conservative forces in the Indian society, as a social support to its rule and, further, adopted a policy of political counterpoise by introducing such devices as communal electorates, representation of 'interests' in legislatures, and others, which tended to perpetuate such distinctions and prevent the national consolidation of the Indian people. The British government also generally subordinated the interests of the Indian economy to those of the British metropolis thereby obstructing its swift and unfettered development so vital to accelerate the process of national consolidation. The development of transport and commerce, the industrialization and growth of cities, and, further, the resultant social cohesion and cultural advance, became limited and even distorted. The British strategy of supporting communal and other conservative forces in the country, through a policy of counterpoise and creation of special communal and other interests, accentuated the tendency of anti-national division.

These were some of the principal reasons why the national consolidation of the Indian people did not reach the level attained by the English or the French people during the nineteenth century.

The role played by the communalists and other native reactionary groups, nourished in the backward colonial environs and in the conditions of a thwarted economic and cultural development, also contributed to this insufficient consummation.

The growth of Indian nationalism was, in fact, the outcome of the increasingly integrating conscious struggle of the progressive forces within the new Indian society, which came into existence during the British period, against the restrictions placed upon their free economic, social, political, and cultural development, as also of the Indian society as a whole, by the British government supported by native reactionary forces like the princes, the landlords, the communalists, and others. Indian nationalism thus came into conflict with the rule of British capitalism supported by Indian feudal remnants and other reactionary forces. This was in contrast to the nationalism of the English and the French peoples who, during the period of their national democratic struggles, came into conflict with their own indigenous feudal classes. This was one of the basic peculiarities of Indian nationalism.

Another important peculiarity of the Indian nationalist movement was that, as a movement of a colonial people living under the subjection of a foreign capitalist nation, it became a mass movement since 1920 i.e. during the phase of world capitalist decline and the rise of powerful socialist world movement. The Indian nationalist movement was directed against the same system of Imperialism against which the socialist movement was also directed.

A third peculiarity of the Indian nationalist movement lay in the fact that within its ranks, the bourgeoisie, which, in fact, developed the movement to a mass level in later stages. exhibited compromising tendencies and desired for a settlement with the ruling Imperialism. This was due to the fact that the Indian bourgeoisie was interlocked with reactionary landlord and moneylending classes in the country, was dependent, due to its economic weakness, on British finance capital and was afraid of the growing dimension of the mass movement interpreting it as a danger to its class interest. This was but logical from the standpoint of the class interest of the bourgeoisie. Such a spectacle unfolded the perspective of the Indian nationalist movement culminating into a non-bourgeois victory of the national forces and of a path of socialist development in the post-independence phase.

Thus, in contrast to the national democratic movements of the English and French peoples against feudalism in the period of the rise of capitalism, which culminated in the victory of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the modern capitalist society in those countries, and inaugurated an epoch of world capitalist development, the Indian nationalist movement against British Imperialism, in the period of world capitalist decline, promised to culminate in a non-bourgeois victory and thereby unfold the perspective of a socialist phase of national existence of the Indian people simultaneous to the advance of the socialist movement in other parts of the world.

Awakening of Dormant Nationalities

As mentioned before, the problem of nationalities and minorities was one of the outstanding problems of the Indian nationalist movement. We will see how this problem emerged and came in the forefront of Indian nationalist politics.

The growth of nationalism in India was an uneven process, both regarding tempo and time, among different communities and provinces. As previously seen, nationalism grew in India as a result of the conditions created by the British conquest and rule and the action of the forces accompanying this conquest and rule. Since this conquest as well as the penetration of new forces did not take place throughout the country at the same time, the conditions, which lead to the rise of political and national consciousness, matured unevenly among different parts and communities. Some provinces and some communities became politically conscious earlier than others. Consequently, the development of the nationalist movement of the Indian people was subsequently paralleled by the growth of independent political movements of such socio-religious categories as the Muslims, the depressed classes, the Sikhs, and the non-Brahmins, and of such provincial social groups speaking the same language and having the same culture as the Andhras, the Malayalis, the Karnatakis, the Tamils, the Kanarese, the Marathas, the Oriyas, the Gujaratis, the Punjabis, the Sindhis, the Bengalis, the Biharis, and others.

The political awakening of the 'dormant' nationalities, which these provincial social groups represented, reached such a high level in the thirties of the present century that they felt themselves as distinct entities, as nationalities. It was brought about by a number of factors. These factors were the further economic development of these provinces which led to the appreciable growth of the industrial and commercial classes; the increase in the educated class; and the impact of the great mass civil disobedience movement of 1930-4 which brought sections of the masses of these nationalities for the first time in the orbit of the notional movement, thereby kindling national consciousness among them. Further, rich provincial literatures, which grew during these years and were the expression of the nationality consciousness among the intelligentsia of these provinces, and which further voiced the latent aspirations of these nationalities to live freely as distinct nationalities, played an important role in making increasing strata of the population nationality-conscious.

The movements of these nationalities were inspired by the urge of self-determination, by their will to live and develop their life freely as distinct nationalities. These movements were the product of the specific pressures, felt by them, of the British rule.

As group awareness developed among these populations, they felt a yearning for a free corporate life unhampered by the existing provincial divisions which did not correspond to linguistic groups but were created mainly for administrative convenience in the course of the extending conquest of the Indian territory by the British. A number of these nationalities like the Biharis, the Andhras, and the Karnatakis, speaking their own languages and having their own cultures, demanded the reconstitution of the existing provinces in such a way as would unite them territorially. For instance, the Andhras wanted to separate Andhra from Madras, the Karnatakis wanted 'Sanyukta' Karnatak separate from Maharashtra. Similar demands were made by the Biharis, Oriyas, and others.

These wakened nationalities also developed their own languages, built up increasingly their own literatures, started their own universities, created their own 'national' theatres, and revived and enriched their own cultures. The Andhras, the Maharashtrians, the Karnatakis, and some other nationalities, also established their own chambers of commerce. These indicated the growth of consciousness of these peoples and their desire for integration.

The desires of these peoples for the reconstruction of their own provinces so that they might be homes of peoples speaking the same languages, having the same cultures, did not conflict with the conception of a single Indian state. It was a demand for the redistribution of existing provinces which were primarily created to meet the needs of British administration.

These awakened peoples did not, however, ask for separate sovereign state existence. They did not demand a political partition of India.

The Indian National Congress had recognized the new development and had adopted the scheme of the reconstruction of the provinces on a linguistic basis. It had visualized the Indian state of a free India as a federal state which, while retaining power and control over matters of such vital importance and common interests as defence, communications, foreign affairs, and others, would give 'widest autonomy to the provinces'. It also declared that no territorial unit would be compelled to remain in the Indian Union and would have the right to secede if it so desired.

Two Contradictory Tendencies at Work

There were, however, two tendencies at work in the growing movement of these awakened nationalities. One was progressive and another reactionary, anti-national, and disruptive.

When these nationalities put forth the demands of their territorial amalgamation, of the free use and the unfettered development of their languages and cultures, and others, they only expressed their national democratic yearning for full self-expression and self-development. This yearning did not conflict with their urge to unite with other nationalities and the rest of India in a broad national movement for Indian independence. In fact, the new awakening could only strengthen their urge to unite, on a national scale, with other groups with a view to bringing the moment of the accomplishment of Indian independence nearer when they could achieve freedom for unrestrained development of their life as distinct nationalities and in union with the rest of the Indian people. In fact, this tendency unfolded the perspective of a free Indian nation composed of varied Indian nationalities, living and developing a rich, complex, and multi-sided social and cultural existence. This tendency was definitely a progressive tendency.

But when the commercial or industrial groups among the awakened nationalities utilized the nationality consciousness of the masses of those nationalities to incite hatred against their trade and industrial rivals belonging to other nationalities and provinces, wrongly giving their sectional interests a national garb, or, when a section of the professional classes of one nationality roused animosity among the masses of that nationality against the professional classes of other nationalities or provinces over a struggle for jobs, giving their sectional interests a national disguise, those professional classes and trading and industrial groups were engaged in disrupting the broad national unity of the Indian people, so vital for realizing the aspirations for freedom and progress of the Indian people as a whole as also those of the many nationalities comprising the Indian people for free development as distinct nationalities. The inter-provincial animosities so roused weakened the urge for national unity and united national movement and prevented the collaboration of all social groups in the country in progressive social, political, and cultural tasks.

Indian Muslims, A National Minority

In addition to the growing movements of the awakened nationalities, there developed, within the framework of the Indian nationalist movement, movements of such minorities like the Muslims, the depressed classes, the Sikhs, and others.

Judged by the criteria previously enumerated, these social groups were not so many nationalities since they did not speak the same language, occupied no definite territory, and lived no common economic life. Far from being nationalities, they were rather socio-religious categories.

The most important of these, the Muslims and the depressed classes, were dispersed over the whole country. Their different sections generally spoke the language of the provinces they inhabited and participated in the economic life of the provincial social groups of which they formed integral parts. In Malabar, the Muslims (Moplas) even dressed like the Hindus. It was so in Bengal and a number of other provinces. Often, even their diet was of the provincial pattern. The Moplas and the Bengali Muslims predominantly ate rice, the staple food of the populations of those provinces, determined by geographical, economic, and historical reasons, while their religious brethren of the Punjab flourished on a diet of wheat, the staple food of all Punjabis whether Hindu or Muslim. Common religion was the only bond between the members of these religious communities. Their vital and daily exchange, social and economic, was with the rest of the provincial population of which they formed a part.

There were no common economic interests of all Muslims, who numbered about nine crores and were interspersed practically all over India. Like the Hindus, they were divided into landlords and princes (nawabs), professional classes, shopkeepers, money-lenders, peasants, and workers. Like the Hindu community, the Muslim community had a class structure comprising classes with divergent and even conflicting interests. In fact the live economic reality conspired to disrupt these supposed monolithic unities by pressing its separate classes to unite with similar classes of other communities. Common religion could not abolish the vital fact that identical economic interests propelled the landlords, the capitalists, the workers, or the peasants of separate communities to unite and endeavour unitedly with their counterpart groups within other communities to satisfy their specific class interests. The propaganda of communalism could only retard the historically progressive process of unification on lines of class division which were based on the existing economic structure.

Similarly, in the political sphere, the interests of the Indians of all faiths urged them to unite in a common national movement against the British rule which impeded the economic, social, and cultural development of the Indian society. Further, prompted by their distinct economic and other sectional interests, some classes of different faiths formed their own political and economic organizations like the landlords' unions, workers' trade unions and socialist parties, chambers of commerce, kisan sabhas, and others.

Thus, the Indian Muslims, lacking a common territorial basis, language, and economic life, neither constituted a nation nor, since divided into classes, represented a monolithic social structure, with common economic and political interests. The landed and bourgeois interests which dominated the principal organization of the Muslims, the All-India Muslim League, and sections of their professional classes which were rivals of the Hindu professional classes in the struggle for posts in the services or seats in legislatures, endeavoured to canalize the political awakening of the Muslim masses into communal channels; but that could not remove the fundamental fact mentioned above. Their activity could only retard the process of the growing national unity of the Indian people and the class unity of the lower strata of the Indian society which sprang from the reality of the British rule over India and the class structure of the Indian society.

It must, however, be recognized that the peoples of such provinces as Sind, Baluchistan, the North-West Frontier, and others, which were preponderantly Muslim, bore the characteristics of distinct nationalities. Each of them had a community of territory, language, culture, and economic life. They belonged to the category of nationalities like the Andhras, the Malayalis, and others, with the difference that they happened to belong, in the overwhelming mass, to a single religion. They were nationalities not because they were predominantly Muslims but because each of them occupied a common territory, spoke a common language, possessed a common culture, and lived a common economic life. They were not parts of any fictitious Indian Muslim nation but distinct nationality groups, the overwhelming majority of which happened to subscribe to one religion.

Communalism among Muslims, Reasons

The political awakening of the Muslim masses was canalized into the incorrect communal channel due to a number of reasons. The professional classes and the bourgeoisie developed within the Muslim community later than from the Hindu community. The former found the latter already firmly established in government services, as also in key positions in trade, industry, and finance. They needed the support of the mass of their community in their struggle with the Hindu rivals for jobs and industrial and trade interests. They misdescribed this struggle between the sections of the same classes, as communal, as those between the Hindu community and the Muslim community. They began to gather the support of the politically awakened Muslim masses among whom national consciousness increasingly developed as a result of the growing nationalist movement in the country, as also due to their poverty under the existing system. The upper elements of the Muslim community, composed of the landlords and sections of the bourgeoisie and the professional classes, tried to give this growing national and class awakening of the Muslim masses a deformed communal form, with a view to secure their support to serve their sectional interests as also to prevent a united mass movement of the poor strata of all communities against the vested interests.

Further, the British strategy of political counterpoise between various communities to maintain its paramountcy, carried out through the devices of communal representation, communal electorate and weightage, and schemes of provincial reorganization to suit the Imperialist interests, helped to accentuate communalism in the country and retard the growth of the national movement of the united Indian people for freedom.[8] That the policy of counterpoise was meant to strengthen the British paramountcy was recognized by a number of British statesmen as we will subsequently see.

Communalism was mainly the result of the peculiar development of the Indian social economy under the British rule, of the uneven economic and cultural development of different communities, and of the action of the strategy both of the British government and the vested interests within those communities.

Late Awakening Among Them, Reasons

Since the Indian Muslims, ninety million strong in a population of four hundred million, formed the most important minority group in India, we will take a brief survey of their political development and various political movements which grew up among them.

The Wahabi Movement was the first organized movement of the Indian Muslims. Though it started as a religio-reform movement, it developed, in subsequent stages, a political, social, and economic content.[9]

The movement, as described in the chapter on politics, developed an anti-British character and even spread to a section of the Muslim peasants in Bengal leading to some peasant revolts which were quelled. The movement died a few years after the Mutiny.

The post-Mutiny period was politically and culturally perhaps the darkest period in the history of the Indian Muslims. Since the Muslims had taken a more prominent part in the Mutiny than the Hindus, the British government did not trust the Indian Muslims and adopted a policy of disfavouring them.[10]

This was the strategy of political counterpoise which Britain employed throughout the period of her rule in India to maintain her paramountcy. Lord Ellenborough had stated in 1843, even before the Mutiny, 'I cannot close my eyes to the belief that that race (Mahomedans) is fundamentally hostile to us and our true policy is to reconciliate the Hindus'.[11] Lord Elphinstone, soon after the suppression of the rising, remarked, '"*Divide et impera*" was the old Roman motto, and it should be ours'.[12]

The Muslims were mostly kept out of the ranks of the army.[13] This had a serious effect on the economic position of the upper class Muslims who had hitherto mainly taken to the military profession.

The British government introduced the English education in India for administrative and other purposes which reduced the importance of the Arabic and the Persian, leading to impoverishment among the Muslim intelligentsia. Their deep resentment against the new policy of the British government made them disorient from the new education while the Hindus were joining the new educational institutions and evolving a new English-knowing intelligentsia. This resulted not only in the cultural backwardness of the Muslims but also in their exclusion from the administrative posts and also the legal, the medical, and other professions. With the assimilation of the new education, the new Hindu educated class imbibed western ideas of democracy and freedom and became the pioneers and leaders of the Indian nationalist movement.

There was another reason why the Muslim community as a whole developed advanced political consciousness later than the Hindus. The major portion of the economically, politically, and culturally dominant section of the Muslim community was concentrated in the Northern India which came under the political domination and the cultural influence of Britain later than other parts with a predominantly Hindu population. 'In Bengal. Bombay, and Madras, the three port areas, the centres from which British commerce and culture radiated, the bourgeoisie developed sooner, naturally; and consequently sooner reached the stage of independence. Now it so happens that those areas are predominantly Hindu (at least in their middle and upper classes) Bengal has masses of Muslims, but they are peasants and hence unaffected.'[14]

It was first in these predominantly Hindu areas that the new economic system was established, modern means of transport spread, industrial cities grew, and new educational institutions were created. The Hindus, who, even in the pre-British period, controlled most of the trade and mostly staffed the revenue department, adapted themselves to the new regime and utilized the new conditions. They therefore first evolved a nationalist and socially progressive intelligentsia.

Sir Syed Ahmad and Muslim Akawening

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (1817-98) was the first Muslim leader to organize a movement for uniting the Muslims and instilling into them a desire for the western education and culture. He worked for the establishment of good relations between the British government and the Indian Muslims. In his book *The Loyal Muhammadens of India*, published in 1860, he tried to establish that the Muslims were basically loyal, that the British government should abandon their attitude of political suspicion of them and that the Muslims on their part should participate in the administration and imbibe the progressive new culture which the British had introduced in India.

Sir Syed formulated an educational scheme on the western model for the Indian Muslims. The scheme combined the western education with the basic teachings of Islam more or less rationalistically interpreted. With the financial aid of the Muslim middle classes and the support of the government, he founded the Mahomedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, which was subsequently transformed into a University.

The Muslim middle classes enthusiastically responded to the Aligarh Movement. The Aligarh College created a modern Muslim intelligentsia which was imbibed with the spirit of political loyalty to the British government and enthusiasm for the western culture. The college aimed at making 'the Mussulmans of India worthy and useful subjects of the British Crown'.[15] The founders of the institution described the British rule in India as the most wonderful phenomenon the world has ever seen.'[16]

Sir Syed opposed the Indian National Congress and dissuaded the Muslims from joining it 'I have undertaken a heavy task against the so-called National Congress and have formed an Association, "The Indian United Patriotic Association".'[17] He strongly held the view that the British government would show favour to the Muslim professional classes 'Government will most certainly attend to it (jobs as colonels and majors in the army) provided you do not give rise to suspicions of disloyalty.'[18] Sir Syed was afraid that the Muslims would be overwhelmed by the Hindus with their superior economic power and greater education, without the support of the British government to the Muslims. He, therefore, advised a policy of loyalty to the latter and opposed the Congress which adopted a policy of Liberal criticism of and opposition to the government.

It was after 1885 when the Indian National Congress was started that Sir Syed came into quite active opposition to the Indian nationalist movement led by the Liberal intelligentsia.

A a member of the Council, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan supported communal against joint electorates.

The Aligarh Movement started under the leadership of Sir Syed played a significant role in bringing about awakening among the Muslims, especially among its middle classes. Chirag Ali, Sayyid Mahdi Ali, Mustafa Khan, Khuda Bukhsh, Poet Hali, Nazir Ahmad, and Muhammad Shibli Numani, were the outstanding leaders and exponents of the ideas of the movement. They exhorted the Muslims to imbibe the western culture, to interpret Quran in the rational terms and in accordance with the needs of the Muslims in the present period and to revise their social system on more or less modern and democratic lines.[19]

As a result of the progressive educational work of the Aligarh Movement, an educated middle class crystallized within the Muslim community which steadily grew to important dimensions by the end of the nineteenth century.

The years from 1890 to 1905 witnessed great political ferment in India. The factors making for this ferment have been enumerated in the chapter on politics. The nationalist movement led by the Congress, as observed earlier, came increasingly under the influence of Extremists like Tilak, Pal, Lajpat Rai, and the Ghose brothers.

The Hindu ideology into which Pal, Ghose, and other leaders clothed nationalism in the new phase could not appeal to the politically conscious Muslim middle classes. But this was only one of the reasons why they did not participate in the nationalist movement during 1905 and subsequent years. There were other reasons also. The main weapon of the Congress was the economic boycott of the British goods. The successful boycott campaign hit the British capitalists and benefited the Indian industrialists who were preponderantly Hindu. 'By 1905 industrialization . . . was no longer negligible in India. Yet most middle class Muslims were still professionals and clerks, not millowners. They had nothing to gain from the use of Indian rather than foreign goods; in fact the boycott merely raised the prices of things that they bought.'[20] The Muslims felt that they would be benefiting the Hindu mill-owners if they practised Swadeshi. The Partition of Bengal was defended by Lord Curzon as a measure adopted for the convenience of the administration. The Liberal leaders of the Indian nationalist movement, however, criticised it as a device to weaken Indian nationalism. The device, they said, created a split within the politically advanced Bengal population, by creating a predominantly Muslim East Bengal and Assam as a counterpoise to a predominantly Hindu West Bengal. The division of Bengal 'on communal lines' was described by the Indian nationalists as a device to gather support of the backward Muslim community against the politically advanced Hindus.

However, political consciousness was rapidly gathering momentum among the Muslim educated middle classes by the end of the nineteenth century. The inability of the administrative machinery to absorb them began to create among them moods of criticism of the government, however mild.

Muslim League, Its Communal and Upper Class Character

The Muslim League, the first political organization of the Muslims mainly composed of the top stratum of the Muslim community and its professional classes, was founded in 1906. It was formed soon after a Muslim deputation led by H. H the Aga Khan met Lord Minto, at that time the Viceroy. The Muslim leaders asked for separate representation to the Muslims in any electoral scheme that might be introduced. The Viceroy acquiesced in the demand and said,

> 'The pith of your address . . . is a claim that any system of representation whether it affects a Municipality or a District Board or a Legislative Council, in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organization, the Muslim community should be represented as a community. You point out that in many cases electoral bodies, as now constituted, cannot be expected to return a Muslim candidate and if by any chance they did so, it would only be at the sacrifice of such candidate's views to those of a majority opposed to his community, whom he would in no way represent; and you justly claim that your proposition should be estimated not on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of the community and the services it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you.'[21]

Lord Morley held the view that it was Lord Minto's support to the claims of the Muslim leaders for separate representation that the latter conceived the idea of and formed the first communal political organization of the Muslims. He wrote to Lord Minto, 'I won't follow you again into our Mahometan dispute. Only I respectfully remind you once more that it was your early speech about their extra claims that first started the Moslem hare.'[22]

The formation of the Muslim League was a landmark in the political evolution of the Indian Muslims. It was the first political organization of the Indian Muslims. The League laid down the following aims: '(1) To promote among Indian Moslems feelings of loyalty towards the British Government . . . (2) to protect the political and other rights of the Indian Moslems and to place their needs and aspirations before the Government in temperate language; (3) so far as possible, without prejudice to objects mentioned under (1) and (2) to promote friendly feelings between Moslems and other communities of India'.[23]

The demands put forth by the League at its Amritsar session held in 1908 revealed its communal as well as the upper and the middle class character. The resolutions passed at the session asked for Muslim representation on the local boards and the Privy Council and a percentage in the services. The League, thereby, expressed the interests and struggle of the Muslim professional classes for jobs and posts.

British Strategy of "Communities, Classes and Interests"

The Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909 introduced the system of separate electorates and representation for the Indian Muslims. The British government introduced the communal principle in the constitutional machinery of the Indian state. The principle was, in a subsequent period, extended and applied in the case of such communities as the Sikhs, the depressed classes, and other minority groups in the country. The Government of India Act of 1935 provided separate electorates for a number of communities.

In addition, the British government also created during its rule separate electorates for such non-communal groups as the landholders, the Europeans, the merchants and the industrialists. The general electorate was reinforced by separate electorates for 'communities, classes and interests'.

The Indian nationalists strongly criticized the system of separate electorate and representation as obstructing the growth of national unity and perpetuating communal distinctions. They even explained it as a deliberate political strategy of Britain to weaken the national unity of the Indian people.

A number of British statesmen held the view that the policy of counterpoise or balancing one class or community against another was absolutely vital for the preservation of the British paramountcy in India. We have already quoted Lord Ellenborough and Mountstuart Elphinstone.

Lord Olivier wrote in 1926: 'No one with a close acquaintance with Indian affairs will be prepared to deny that, on the whole, there is a predominant bias in British officialdom in India in favour of the Muslim community, partly on the ground of closer sympathy, but more largely as a make-weight against Hindu nationalism.'[24]

Lord Minto, in his reply to the deputation of the Muslim leaders in 1906, clarified, as we have previously seen, that the conceding of communal representation to the Muslims would be largely a reward to them for their services to the Empire. He further remarked in his speech before the Legislative Council, ' . . . increased representation of Indian interests and communities would not weaken but strengthen British administration.'[25]

The maintenance of the British paramountcy had been the dominant urge of Britain in India, which determined its political strategy during the dfferent phases of its rule. Even Liberal British ideologues and statesmen visualized only a good and not a free government for India. 'A good government to a people cannot but be a free government. Under imperialism a free government, as James Mill wrote, is "utterly out of question". A free government begins only with a break with imperialism. Minto wrote to Morley, 16 May 1907: "We cannot move far in that direction (responsible government) *and any move we make is merely a sop to impossible ambitions*".'[26]

A policy of counterpoise became, therefore, necessary and was adopted to maintain the British paramountcy in India. After the Mutiny, the princes and the zemindars served as a counterpoise. Lord Lytton desired to base the British rule on the support of an Indian aristocratic class. Lord Dufferin considered the liberal intelligentsia which developed in India as a make-weight against the growing forces of mass revolt and helped them to found the Indian National Congress, a platform for constitutional agitation. He, however, soon felt the Congress going 'seditious'. Minto found in the rising Muslim professional classes a counterpoise against the militant nationalists composed mainly of the Hindu professional classes and the middle classes of the Indian National Congress.

Its Criticism

As the depressed classes, the Sikhs, and other minority groups, in later periods, developed political consciousness, in the reform schemes which were formulated they were given special electorates and representation and other rights and advantages. This led to the conciliation of the newly arisen politically conscious groups which also therefore could serve as a counterpoise to the growing nationalist mass movement. K. B. Krishna described this phenomenon thus:

> "The British created artificially several classes. The moment these classes came into existence the struggle between them began. The British gave an impetus and a legal acceleration to these struggles. Princes, territorial magnates, industrial classes and Moslems were brought into play to counteract the claims of the lawyers, schoolmasters, students and other middle classes. . . . Lord Lytton and Curzon spoke of a council of notables as a suitable counterpoise to "the claims of the Baboos, whose organization was the Congress". Both Minto and Morley openly used this idea of counterpoise in their letters and circulars. Today the new constitution for India rests on a perfect equipoise of counterpoising policies.'[27]

The same author also remarked:

> 'The Indian Mutiny provided the basis for a new type of imperialism. By this I mean that the British policy in India since the Mutiny, has been a combination of liberal and imperialist policies. The policy of counterpoise is one aspect of such a new imperialism. It is both liberal and imperialist: liberal in that it recognizes and concedes the claims of the classes as they arise, and imperialist in the sense that what is conceded is always circumscribed by imperial interests utilizing the rivalries of various classes and interests.'[28]

And further, 'The main theoretical idea of this policy is the "principle of communities, classes and interests" . . . . From the beginning, this idea has nothing to do with formal democracy. It is solely concerned with a balance of interests, classes, and certain religious adherents (communities), as each interest and class clamoured for power.'[29] And further,

> '(1) The classification adopted by the Government of India is unscientific, full of cross-divisions, ignoring the real nationalities, or historical communities. . . .
>
> '(3) This principle created a school of Indian moderate politics.
> '(4) It led to an artificial crop of associations, interests, and classes on purely religious lines. After the Moslems, the Sikhs, the Indian Christians, the Anglo-Indians, the Untouchables, and so on, followed. . . .
>
> ' . . . . the real object of communal electorates was to set up a Moslem professional class as a counterpoise against the Hindu professional class, after creating landed, merchant, and commercial limited electorates which returned their respective classes. Herein lies the origins of the theory of communal representation.'[30]

The author described the basic British policy in India as 'the amalgam of coercion, counterpoise, concession, and strengthening of paramountcy.'[31]

Even the concessions which were given were generally made with a view to preserve the British rule in India . . . 'However, liberal may be the concessions which have been made, and which at any future time be made, we have not the slightest intention of abandoning our Indian possessions, and it is highly improbable that any such intention will be entertained by our posterity.'[32] Reforms and concessions granted to specific social groups composing a people have the tendency to divide them and retard the growth of a united movement. The Morley-Minto Reforms, the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, and the Constitution evolved by the Government of India Act of 1935, which gave special representation to an increasing number of minority groups and interests in the country, created dissensions among several of these groups, in spite of the fact that the nationalalist movement had been increasingly getting strong as a result of the political awakening of the lower strata of the Indian society.

Growing Militancy among Muslims after 1912

Political consciousness steadily grew among the Indian Muslims and from 1912 onwards, it even began to take a militant form. The Muslim middle classes developed increasing political maturity in the years immediately preceding the First World War. The national democratic Young Turk Movement led by Enver Pasha, also greatly influenced the Indian Muslims in the direction of a programme of self-government for India, which was subsequently adopted by the League in 1913. The Muslims now steadily began to be drawn into the orbit of nationalist movement.

'What happened in the period beginning just before the First World War, was that the new middle classes among the Muslims . . . who were educated and vocal . . . outgrew their dependent position within the imperial system, and began also to express their dissatisfaction.'[33]

Dr. Ansari, Abdul Kalam Azad, Maulana Mahomed Ali, and Hakim Ajmal Khan, were the outstanding leaders of the Muslims during this new and higher phase of their political awakening. In 1912, Azad started *Al Hilal* and Mahomed Ali founded and edited the English paper *Comrade* and the Urdu paper *Hamdard*. These papers deepened the political consciousness of the Muslims and imbued them with a nationalist spirit.

The Muslim League at its Lucknow session in 1913 adopted the goal of 'attainment, under the aegis of the British Crown, of Self-Government suited to India.'

After the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the British government took strong measures against political leaders and groups among the Muslims whose activities it considered detrimental to the efficient conduct of the war. They banned *Al Hilal*, *Comrade* and *Hamdard*, and interned the Muslim leaders like Mahomed Ali, Shaukat Ali, Maulana Azad, and Hazrat Mohani, in 1915.

Both the League and the Congress held their respective sessions at Lucknow. The League session was attended by prominent Congress leaders—Pandit Malaviya, Gandhi and others. H. H. the Aga Khan disapproved of the new nationalist orientation of the League and resigned the office of the permanent presidentship of the League soon after. This was an indication that the League was being politically radicalized.

In Chapter XVIII, we have referred to the Lucknow Pact concluded between the League and the Congress in 1916. This was the first instance of collaboration between the two organizations. The Pact provided greater weightage with separate electorates to the Muslims in zones where they constituted a minority, and demanded from the British government 'that a definite step should be taken towards Self-Government by granting the Reforms contained in the Scheme' and further, 'that in the reconstruction of the Empire, India shall be lifted from the position of a dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the Self-Governing Dominions.'

The League with the Muslim middle classes as its predominant social basis was steadily orienting towards nationalist conceptions and aims though on its own communal basis.

At its session held at Delhi in 1918, the League passed a resolution demanding the application of the principle of self-determination to India.

Khilafat and Hijrat Movements

The genesis and the history of the Khilafat agitation and movement has been narrated in the chapter on politics. The Khilafat Conference was soon formed by the Muslim leaders with the active support of Gandhi and other prominent Congress leaders. The Conference decided to start a struggle against what was described as the Khilatfat Wrong and adopted the programme of the Boycott of British goods and Non-Co-operation with the government.

Gandhi and the Indian National Congress enthusiastically supported the Khilafat Conference and the League in their demands for the restoration of the Holy Lands, Ottoman Thrace, and Smyrna to Turkey.

The Ulema or the Muslim Divines formed their organization, Jamiat-Ul-Ulema, in 1919. It declared its support to the demands of the Khilafat Conference. It exhorted the Indian Muslims to participate in the Non-Co-operation Movement, the first nationalist mass struggle in India which was started by the Congress with the support of the Khilafat Conference and which had for its aim the redressing of the injustices of the Treaty of Sevres, the withdrawal of repressive measures of the government in the Punjab and other parts of the country, and 'the establishment of Swaraj.'

The history of the Non-Co-operation Movement, during its various phases, has been narrated in Chapter XVIII. The Muslims in great numbers responded to the call of their leaders and participated in the movement.

> 'One noticeable feature of the general excitement was the unprecedented fraternization between the Hindus and the Moslems.'[34]

Mahomed Ali, Shaukat Ali, and a number of other Muslim leaders, were imprisoned in the course of the movement. Hundreds of Muslim volunteers were imprisoned for refusing to obey the ban put on their organization by the government. The Muslims participated in the movement in all its phases.

A section of the Muslims of Sindh and the North-West Frontier organized a Hijrat Movement. As a protest against the Treaty of Sevres, they decided to leave India and migrate to and domicile in Afghanistan. The Afghan government, however, refused them admission. The movement proved abortive. The Mopla Rebellion which broke out in 1921 was considered by the government as an indirect consequence of the propaganda of the Khilafat leaders who exhorted the Moplas to join the Non-Co-operation Movement.

The Mopla Rebellion illustrates how a predominantly economic struggle between the peasants and landlords assumes a communal complexion when these classes belong to different religions. 'The Mopla Rebellion was in the main a movement of Moplas against the Hindu moneylenders and landlords, and against the government. A leaflet issued by the Madras Publicity Bureau analyses the problem thus: ' . . . . there are two sets of causes predisposing the Mopla to outrage. The religious motive is the more powerful, but there is also the effect of the economic contrast between the hard living of the Mopla and the life of the stately houses belonging to the Nambudri landlords. . . ." '[35]

Maulana Hazrat Mohani, presiding over the session of the Muslim League at Ahmedabad in 1921, said in his presidential speech: 'The Musalmans should realize that by establishing the Republic of India, their gain will be twofold: firstly, as citizens of a democratic Republic they will enjoy equal rights and receive the same benefits as others, and secondly, by curtailing the British sphere of influence, they will give the Islamic world the respite needed for the development of constructive activities.'[36]

When Mohani brought the proposal of replacing the aim of the Indian National Congress of Self-Government by that of the establishment of the Indian Republic at the Congress session held at Ahmedabad at the same time, Gandhi who disagreed sharply rebuked him for his 'levity'. The proposal of Mohani was rejected by the Congress.

After the Chauri Chaura incident, the Working Committee of the Congress led by Gandhi called off the Non-Co-operation Movement.

The Non-Co-operation Movement had a great historical significance from the standpoint of the evolution of the political consciousness of the Indian Muslims. It revealed that the political consciousness which was formerly restricted to the aristocratic and upper middle strata of the Muslim community had grown among a section of the Muslim masses also. It is true that the Khilafat issue was a religious issue, but, linked up with the struggle for Swaraj, it had the effect of raising the national consciousness of the Muslims. Also, for the first time, large sections of the Hindus and the Muslims collaborated for a national goal, the goal of Self-Government for India. They participated in various forms of direct action decided upon by the united leadership of the Congress and political Muslim organizations. The struggle was also no longer merely over the distribution of seats in the legislative councils or posts in the public services.

The calling off of the movement by Gandhi and the Congress Working Committee created a feeling of despondency among the people. The deposition of Mahomed VI as Sultan and Khaliph and the installing of 'abd al Majid in his place as Khaliph only by the Turkish people in 1922, accentuated this feeling among the Indian Muslims. History played a cruel joke on the Indian Muslims. While they had started a struggle, one of the main aims of which was the restoration of the Holy Lands to the Sultan of Turkey who was also the spiritual head of the world Muslims, the Turkish people themselves secularized the Turkish state by separating religion from state.

After the end of the Nor-Co-operation Movement, the Hindu-Muslim unity, which was appreciably built up, began to disintegrate. The national unity increasingly began to give way to communal hostility and division. A series of communal riots broke out in the post-Non-Co-operation period, that in

Kohat being the most serious.

Jawaharlal Nehru explained the political demoralization which ensued after 1922 in the following words: 'It is possible that this sudden bottling up of a great movement' (Nehru refers to the Bardoli decision calling off the Non-Co-operation Movement) 'contributed to a tragic development in the country. The drift to sporadic and futile violence in the political struggle was stopped, but the suppressed violence had to find a way out, and in the following years this perhaps aggravated the communal trouble.'[37]

Perhaps it is not true that the 'suppressed violence' was the cause of the eruption of the 'communal trouble'. The outbreak of communalism was probably due to the twofold fact that the national consciousness had not still struck deep roots especially among the backward Muslims and secondly, the nationalist leaders failed to give an appropriate programme after the end of the Non-Co-operation Movement. The non-political constructive programme formulated by Gandhi comprising items like prohibition, spinning, and the liquidaton of untouchability, could not be popular with the Muslim masses. The communal propaganda very likely achieved a certain amount of success due to the failure of the Congress, the leader of the nationalist movement, to evolve an appropriate political, social, and economic programme for the Indian people.

There was another reason why the Muslims increasingly began to disorientate from nationalism and develop a communal outlook.

Though the Indian National Congress had been non-communal secular national organization of the Indian people having national freedom for its goal, its outstanding leaders like Gandhi sometimes attempted to inject Hindu religious ideas into the nationalist movement. Gandhi, for instance, interpreted Swaraj as Ram Raj, a historical memory which could not enthuse the Muslims. The foisting of some Hindu religious ideas on the secular movement of the Indian people for political freedom only tended to create a wrong suspicion in the minds of the Muslims that the nationalist movement started by the Congress was a Hindu movement. As R. P. Dutt remarks: 'The political, social, and economic programme of the national movement should and can unite the masses of the

Indian people above, across and apart from religious affiliations. Such a strengthened, secularized, modernized, united democratic movement can be the strongest force at the present stage to counter communal agitation.'[38]

Communalism, its Real Essence

Communalism was only the disguised expression of the struggle between the vested interests belonging to different faiths who gave a communal form to that struggle. It also was the form within which the struggle of the professional classes of different communities over posts and seats was carried on. One of the most effective methods to combat communalism was to unite the lower strata of different communities in a movement for securing their common economic and other interests.

The masses belonging to the Hindu and Muslism communities had common political and economic interests. The distribution of seats in the legislative councils or posts in the public services did not affect them. A programme, based on their common interests, political and economic, could enthuse and unite them. In proportion that they engaged themselves in the movement for fulfilling such a programme of common interests, communal appeals lost their force and the national unity was built up.

> ‘The communal question has no reference to religious issues. They refer to spoils and percentages, seats and favours. The communal question is in general a question of struggle between various sections of the professional classes belonging to different faiths.
>
> ‘The memorandum of the Government of Bombay to the Indian Statutory Commission put it thus: "Something is also due to the growth of education among Mohammedans . . . with the growth of political consciousness among the Mohammedans and other backward classes came a realization of their weakness, through, among other causes, the disproportionate share of appointments held in the public services by the advanced classes and the status and influence that go with them." Here the Bombay Government recognized in the communal question the struggle between the backward and advanced classes for posts and emoluments.'[39]

There were other types of struggles which, though mainly economic in origin, took a communal form. In provinces like

Bengal, due to historical reasons, it happened that the peasantry was predominantly Muslim, while the landlords were mainly Hindu. Due to the cultural backwardness of the peasantry it was not difficult for the communalists to misrepresent any real economic conflict between the Muslim tenants and the Hindu landlords as a communal conflict and subsequently even convert it into a communal conflict. Similarly, conflicts between moneylenders who were often Hindus and the Muslim debtors were sometimes misrepresented as the oppression of the Muslims by the Hindus and given a communal turn by the communalists. The landlord-tenant and moneylender-debtor conflicts were misdescribed as communal conflicts.

Thus the political and economic struggles between the classes of different communities were given a communal form by the communalists.

These various struggles were classified by K. B. Krishna in his Book, *The Problem of Minorities,* as follows:

> '1. There is the struggle between the professional classes of different faiths and communities. The Moslem, Sikh, Indian Christian, Anglo-Indian, Untouchable professional classes are unequal educationally, politically and economically compared with the Hindu professional classes. The reforms and political ambitions increased this rivalry between these classes. The struggle has taken the name of the problem of minorities or the problem of communal electorates.
>
> '2. The struggle is spread also to the commercial, industrial and shopkeeping-trading classes of different faiths and communities. The rivalry between the Hindu and Moslem shopkeepers always comes into prominence during their respective holidays, and during the Civil Disobedience Movement. The rivalry between the Hindu moneylender and the Moslem borrower, between the Hindu landlord and the Moslem tenant, between the Hindu and Moslem moneylenders and between the Hindu and Moslem landlords comes under this category.
>
> '3. Lastly, there are the struggles between the conservative classes of different faiths arising from backwardness, illiteracy, sometimes from the machinations of rival politicians, mob frenzy and all the social contradictions of the society.
>
> 'These struggles arising from the social economy of the country, are accelerated in an epoch of the development of Indian capitalism under feudal conditions, by British imperialism, by its policy of counterpoise.'[40]

The political movement of the Muslim community declined after the end of Non-Co-operation. The Muslim League became again an organization of the Muslim conservatives. It failed to give any progressive political lead to that community. The League included a small group of nationalist Muslims within it.

The appointment of the Simon Commission composed exclusively of the non-Indians created almost universal resentment among the Indian people. All political parties decided upon its boycott. Even the League which was practically led by the Muslim conservatives could not be unanimous on the question of co-operation with it. The League consequently split. One section led by Sir Mahommad Shafi, Malik Firoz Khan Noon, and Sir Mohammad Iqbal, met at Lahore under the presidentship of Sir Mahommad Shafi. It passed a resolution welcoming the Commission.

The other section of the League held its conference at Calcutta under the presidentship of Jinnah. It passed a resolution boycotting the Commission.

The Indian National Congress had published the Nehru Committee Report which outlined the basic features of a constitution of India (see Chapter XVIII). The Committee recommended a scheme of joint electorate with reservation of seats, the separation of Sind, and the elevation of Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province to the status of other provinces. It condemned the scheme of separate electorates. Further, it decided that the reservation of seats, both in the Central and Provincial Legislatures, should be determined by the proportion of the Muslims to the total population.[41] The League, through Jinnah, its accredited leader, asked the Congress to introduce a number of amendments to the Nehru Constitution, one of the amendments being that one-third of the seats in the Central Legislature be reserved for the Muslim community. The Congress refused to agree to the proposed amendments and the prospect of an alliance between the Congress and the League for a joint struggle vanished.

Fourteen Points of Jinnah

Jinnah thereafter in 1929 published his famous Fourteen Points which became the basis of the propaganda campaign of the League subsequently. The proposals embodied in the Fourteen Points ran counter to the most important suggestions made in the Nehru Committee Report and included among others the establishment of a federal state with the residuary powers vested in the provinces, the Muslim representation in the Central Legislature to be not less than one-third, separate electorates, and the inclusion of one-third Muslim Ministers in any Central or Provincial cabinet which might be formed.

Soon after, a split took place between the nationalist Muslims and the conservative section within the League. The former desired to support the Nehru Report with minor modifications. They formed the Nationalist Muslim Party.

The history of the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-4 has been narrated in Chapter XVIII. The nationalist Muslims enthusiastically participated in it.

The Aga Khan unofficially represented the League at the Round Table Conference. In the absence of agreement among the Indian groups at the Conference over the communal question, Ramsay Macdonald, the British Premier, announced the Communal Award.

After 1933, the Muslim League began to reorganize and consolidate itself under the leadership of Jinnah. It elected him as its President and decided upon a programme of intensified political activity.

The League at its session in Bombay in 1936 condemned and rejected the Federal Scheme embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, for not meeting the demand of the self-government of the people.

As a result of its great successes in the elections held in 1937, the Congress was able to form governments in a number of provinces. Jinnah and other Muslim leaders declared their dissatisfaction with the Congress Governments. They accused them of being hostile to the Muslim interests and of favouring the Hindus.

Jinnah's Criticism of Congress Governments

Jinnah, in his presidential address at the Lucknow session of the League held in 1937, remarked:

> 'The present leadership of the Congress, especially during the last ten years, has been responsible for alienating the Mussalmans of India more and more by pursuing a policy which is exclusively Hindu, and

> since they have formed governments in six provinces where they are in majority, they have by their words, deeds and programme shown that the Mussalmans cannot expect any justice or fair play at their hands. On the very threshold of what little power and responsibility is given, the majority community have clearly shown their hand that Hindustan is for the Hindus.'[41]

The Congress might have erred in not forming composite Coalition governments in the provinces comprising both the Congressmen and the Leaguers, thus creating the impression that it aimed at the monopoly of power. Its Vidya Mandir scheme might have a Hindu flavour. There might even have been instances of conscious or unconscious favour being shown to some individual Hindus by some Congress ministers. Even the social and economic programme of the Congress governments might have fallen and did fall short of the expectation of the Indian masses. They might have, in contravention of their pre-election declaration, even made use of such laws as the Criminal Law Amendment Act, endorsed firing at the strikers, and even enacted the Bombay Trade Disputes Act limiting the democratic freedom of the workers to strike. But the League's claim that the Congress governments pursued a deliberate policy of suppressing the Muslim community and establishing the Hindu hegemony over it was travesty of fact, a total untruth.

The failure of the Congress governments, reflecting mainly the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie, to satisfy the economic and other demands of the poor strata of the Indian society, in spite of minor reforms, helped the communalist League leaders to antagonize sections of the Muslim masses against the Congress and win them for the League. Since the majority of the capitalists and zemindars were by religion Hindu, the League leaders could with some success decoy the poor Muslims into concluding that the Congress leadership which incidentally happened to be predominantly Hindu deliberately stabilized the exploitation from which they had been suffering at the hands of the Hindu landlords and industrialists out of a communal motive. Class economic discontent and resentment of the Muslim masses were, thus through communal propaganda, canalized in communal channels and transformed into communal antagonism.

The League intensified its anti-Congress campaign at all its subsequently held sessions. It also maintained its propaganda against the proposal of the Congress for a Constituent Assembly elected by universal adult suffrage with separate electorates for the Muslims, on the ground that such a Constituent Assembly in a preponderately Hindu India would be dominated by the Hindu majority.

Muslim League Demands Pakistan

The League was now steadily advancing from its previous demands of separate electorates and special weightages to the final full-fledged demand for Pakistan or the splitting up of India into a sovereign Muslim state and a sovereign Hindu state. The political-ideological basis for the latter demand, which it declared at its Lahore session in 1940, was the two-nation theory according to which the Muslims—a socio-religious category dispersed all over India—were a distinct nation. This conception of a nation was different from others such as the one which defined a nation as a historically evolved community of people speaking a single language, living a common economic life, occupying a definite territory, and with a common psychological make-up and culture.

The outbreak of the war in 1939 transformed the Indian political situation. The Indian National Congress resented Britain's action in committing India to war without the consent of the Indian people. Under its instruction, the Congress ministries resigned in the Provinces.

The Muslim League expressed its jubilation at the resignation of the Congress ministries by observing a 'Day of Deliverance'.

The All-India Muslim League held its session at Lahore in 1940. It was at this session that the resolution embodying the demand of Pakistan or the establishment of sovereign states of the Muslims on the basis of the two-nation theory, was adopted.

The resolution stated as follows:

> 'Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to Muslims unless it is designed on the follow-

ing basic principle, viz., that geographically contiguous units are demarcated in regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-western and Eastern Zones of India should be grouped to constitute "Independent States" in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.

'That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in these units and in these regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them; and in other parts of India where the Mussalmans are in a minority, adequate effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.

'This session further authorizes the Working Committee to frame a scheme of constitution in accordance with these basic principles, providing for the assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as defence, external affairs, communications, customs and such other matters as may be necessary.'

The League held its session at Madras in 1941 when Jinnah in his presidential address remarked: 'We do not want, under any circumstances, a constitution of an all-India character with one Government at the Centre. . . . We are determined to establish the status of an independent nation and an independent state in this sub-continent.'

Other Muslim Organizations

Before describing the attitude and views of other political groups and organizations in the country such as the Congress, the Liberals, the depressed classes, and others, regarding the Pakistan scheme of the League, we will briefly refer to some other Muslim political organizations, which sprang up from 1928 onwards and which embodied the growing political and national awakening of the Indian Muslims.

Abdul Gaffar Khan founded in 1930 the Khudai Khidmatgars, a nationalist pro-Congress organization of the politically awakened Muslims of the North-West Frontier Province It organized a no-rent campaign of a section of the peasantry of the province during the period of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The organization stood for national independence to be achieved by the Gandhian methodology of struggle

In Baluchistan, the nationalist Muslims were organized in the pro-Congress Watan Party.

The All-India Momin Conference was another political organization of the Indian Muslims, mainly composed of the Muslim weavers. It generally supported the Indian National Congress and was anti-League and anti-Pakistan.[43]

The Ahrar Party was founded in 1930 in the Punjab by a group of the Muslim nationalist leaders. For some time, it won great political influence among the Muslim masses of the province. The Ahrars participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-34 as also in the Satyagraha movement launched by the Congress in 1940.

The All-India Shia Political Conference was the political organization of the Indian Shias. The Conference generally supported the Indian National Congress.

In Bengal, the Krishak Praja Party led by Fazlul Huq, an effective demagogue and a 'quick-change' political artist, gathered extensive support among the Muslim peasantry with a programme of 'agrarian revolution but through parliamentary and constitutional means'. The fact that in Bengal the zemindars were preponderatingly Hindu and the peasantry Muslim, helped the Party to secure a broad mass basis among the latter. Under the leadership of Huq, the Party exhibited sometimes communalist and sometimes nationalist tendencies.

The Khaksar Party founded by Allama Mashriqi in 1931 was another important organization of the Indian Muslims.

The Khaksar Movement was based on the religious ideology of early Islam. The Khaksars considered themselves as militant fighters for the regeneration of modern Islam and elevation of the moral tone of the Muslim society which had become corrupt. The movement claimed to represent the poor strata of society. It exhorted its members to live a puritanical life and devote themselves to social service.

The Khaksar Party was built on the basis of almost military discipline. It demanded from its members implicit obedience to the leader. The Party sometimes even dreamt of world conquest. 'Our aim is to be once again Kings, Rulers, World Conquerors and Supreme Masters on earth.'[44] This gave the Khaksar movement a strong fascist flavour.

The movement gained greatest strength in the Punjab, the United Provinces, and Sind. It spread in some centres of South

India also.

The Azad Muslim Conference formed under the presidentship of Allah Bux in 1940 was a synthetic group evolved out of the nationalist Muslims within the Indian National Congress, Jamyatal-ulema, the Ahrar Party, and other nationalist Muslim concentrations. It was opposed to the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan and supported the Congress demand for the reconstruction of the existing provinces on a linguistic basis and for granting those provinces 'right of self-determination to the point of secession but in the context of Indian freedom'.[45]

History of Idea of Pakistan

Having referred to the principal Muslim organizations in the country, we will proceed to state the various views about the scheme of Pakistan adopted by the Muslim League and the theory on which it was based, namely the theory that the Indian Muslims constituted a separate nation. Common religion was the basic criterion on which the theory was founded.

Jinnah traced the origin of the idea of Pakistan to Iqbal, the great Muslim poet.

> 'The idea of Pakistan, it is well known, originated in the brain of the late Hazrat Allma Iqbal. He was the mouthpiece of the highest aspirations of his people.'[46]

Iqbal had said in his presidential address to the Muslim League in 1930 thus: 'I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan, amalgamated into a single state. Self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims at least the North-west India'.[47]

It was, however, only after the promulgation of the New Constitution and the establishment of the Congress governments in a number of provinces that the conception of Pakistan drew the attention of the Muslim political groups.

In his presidential address to the Lahore session of the League in 1940, Jinnah declared that the Indian Muslims were not merely a religious community but formed a distinct nation

'The problem in India is not of an inter-communal character, but manifestly of an international one, and it must be treated as such. So long as this basic and fundamental truth is not realized, any constitution that may be built will result in disaster. . . . If the British government are really in earnest and sincere to secure peace and happiness of the people of this sub-continent, the only course open to us all is to allow the major nations separate homelands by dividing India into "autonomous national states".'[48]

Jinnah further declared that the Hindus and the Muslims were not and could not be welded into a single Indian nation. He argued:

> 'It is extremely difficult to appreciate why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real nature of Islam and Hinduism. They are not religions in the strict sense of the word but are, in fact, different and distinct social orders and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality. . . . The Hindus and Muslims have two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures. They neither intermarry, nor interdine together and, indeed, they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Mussalmans derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, their heroes are different . . . very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and likewise their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built for the government of such a state. . . .
>
> 'Muslim India cannot accept any constitution which must necessarily result in a Hindu majority government. Hindus and Muslims brought together under a democratic system forced upon the minorities can only mean Hindu Raj. Democracy of the kind with which the Congress High Command is enamoured would mean the complete destruction of what is most precious in Islam. . . .
>
> 'Mussalmans are a nation according to any definition of a nation and they must have their homelands, their territory and their state. . . . We wish our people to develop to the fullest our spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political life in a way that we think best and in consonance with our own ideals and according to the genius of our people.'[49]

The above comprehensive extract from Jinnah's presidential address at the Lahore session of the League sums up the basic essence of his argument in favour of Pakistan.

The protagonists of Pakistan rejected the scheme of a federal state for India with a central cabinet responsible to a central legislature retaining control over such vital matters as defence, communications, foreign affairs, etc. They declared that a central legislature would be dominated by a Hindu majority since the Hindus formed the majority of the Indian people.

Though the Muslim League had still not published any authoritative scheme giving a concrete and detailed idea of the nature of the autonomous sovereign Muslim states and their state and economic systems, individual Muslim intellectuals had evolved and published their own schemes.

Prominent among these schemes were those of 'Punjabi', Aligarh Professors, Dr. Latif, Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, Rahmat Ali, and Sir Abdullah Haroon Committee.

These schemes, though differing from one another, agreed regarding their basic premise that the Hindus and the Muslims in India were two distinct nations.

None of these schemes, as mentioned before, had been endorsed and adopted by the League which, however, had not still evolved any concrete and detailed scheme of Pakistan of its own.

Views of Various Parties and Leaders on Pakistan

We shall proceed to state the views of the important political organizations and groups in the country on the theory that the Indian Muslims formed a nation and that separate states of the Muslims in areas where they constituted a majority should be set up.

(*a*) *Leaders of Indian National Congress*

The Indian National Congress, under the leadership of the Liberals as well as the Militant Nationalists like Tilak, Pal and Ghose, always held the view that the Indians were a homogeneous nation. Their propaganda was directed to make them conscious of their being a nation and take to the road of a united struggle for administrative reforms and Self-Government. Gandhi and other leaders who succeeded the earlier leaders continued to subscribe to the same view though recognizing that the interests of the minority communities such as the Muslims, the depressed classes and others should be adequately safeguarded. They held the view that under a genuinely democratic constitution those interests could always be protected.

The Congress leaders were opposed to the very principle and system of separate communal electorates and weightages. They considered them as calculated to perpetuate and deepen communalism. However, in the interests of the Hindnu-Muslim unity which they considered as an indispensable and vital prerequisite for achieving freedom, they conceded the demands of the Muslims, the depressed classes, and other minorities, for separate electorates, weightages, or the reservation of seats. The Congress-League Pact of 1916 and Gandhi's concession to the depressed classes in the matter of seats in the legislatures in 1933 (the Poona Pact) were two of the instances of this. However, the Congress officially had not considered the Indian Muslims or any other minority in India as a separate nation.

The Congress held the view that the Indian people as a whole constituted the Indian nation. It criticized, however, the existing division of India into various provinces created by the British government as not corresponding to the different linguistic groups which composed the Indian nation. It evolved a scheme of dividing India into provinces, each province inhabited by the people speaking the same language.

Recognizing the linguistic and provincial-cultural heterogeneity of the Indian nation, the Congress stood for a federal state structure for India, which would invest the Federal Centre with control over matters of common and vital interest leaving the residuary powers to the federating units (based on the linguistic principle) and 'giving them the largest measure of provincial autonomy'.

The Working Committee of the Congress passed a resolution at its Delhi session in 1942 in which it declared that no territorial unit would be coerced into joining the Indian Union against its will.

Gandhi and other Congress leaders, however, did not accept, in fact, combated the League's theory that the Indian Muslims formed a nation. They rejected religion as the determinant of a nation, though recognizing a group with a common religion as a cultural and communal minority. Arguing against the two-nation theory of the League leaders, Gandhi remarked:

> 'The "two-nations" theory is an untruth. The vast majority of Muslims of India are converts to Islam or are descendants of converts. They did not become a nation as soon as they became converts. A Bengali Muslim speaks the same tongue that a Bengali Hindu does, eats the same food, has the same amusements as his Hindu neighbour. They dress alike . . . The same phenomenon is observable more or less in the South among the poor who constitute the masses of India . . . The Hindu law of inheritance governs many Muslim groups . . . Hindus and Muslims of India are not two nations. Those whom God has made one, man will never be able to divide.'[50]

Gandhi expressed the same view to Louis Fischer, the well-known American journalist. He said:

> 'We are not two nations . . . We in India have a common culture. In the North, Hindi and Urdu are understood by both Hindus and Moslems. In Madras, Hindus and Moslems speak Tamil, and in Bengal they both speak Bengali and neither Hindi or Urdu. When communal riots break out, they are always provoked by incidents over cows and by religious processions. That means that it is our superstitions that create the trouble and not our separate nationalities.'[51]

Gandhi blamed the British government for the Hindu-Muslim cleavage to a great degree. He remarked to the same journalist, 'As long as the third power, England is here, our communal differences will continue to plague us. Far back, Lord Minto, then Viceroy, declared that the British had to keep Moslems and Hindus apart in order to facilitate the domination of India'.[52]

However, Gandhi was convinced that if the Indian Muslims became determined to separate, no power could prevent them from doing so. He said, 'I know no non-violent method of compelling the obedience of nine crores of Muslims to the will of the rest of India, however powerful a majority the rest may represent. The Muslims must have the same right of self-determination that the rest of India has. Any member may claim a division.'[53]

And further, 'As a man of non-violence I cannot forcibly resist the proposed partition if the Muslims of India really insist upon it. But I cannot be a willing party to the vivisection. I would employ every non-violent means to prevent it . . . Partition means a patent untruth. My whole soul rebells against the idea that Hinduism and Islam represent two antagonistic cultures and doctrines . . . But that is my belief. I cannot thrust it down the throats of the Muslims who think that they are a different nation.'[54]

Satyamurti, a prominent Congress leader, described the Muslim leaders' contention that the Muslim community was economically exploited by the Hindu community as incorrect. He asserted that none of the two communities was economically homogeneous. The Hindu community was composed of the class of the capitalists, the landlords, and other rich men on one hand, and the labourers, the tenants, and other poor men on the other. The composition of the Muslim community was similar. Just as the economic interests of the poor Muslims were identical with those of the rich Muslims, those of the poor Hindus were also not identical with those of the wealthy Hindus. Hence, he said, it was incorrect to say that the Muslim community was a victim of economic exploitation at the hands of the Hindu community.[55]

Rajendra Prasad, another prominent leader of the Congress, attributed the growth of communalism in India to the system of separate electorates and weightages. 'It is equally clear that separate electorates have caused and aroused more communal feeling than anything else, and that it is not confined to communities which have enjoyed these separate electorates but has also permeated other communities who have fallen a prey to it, not only as against Muslims but also among different sub-communities or caste interests. This is a great legacy from our recent past.'[56]

The demand for Pakistan, Rajendra Prasad further remarked, ran counter to the general tendency in the contemporary world 'in favour of combination of states'. In the present world milieu, it was extremely difficult for the small states to survive and retain independence. Since a planned economy alone, in modern conditions, could assure economic advance or prosperity to a nation and since small states, with limited natural resources, could not undertake schemes of planned economy, Pakistan, by aiming at splitting India into a number of states, jeopardized the economic future of the Indian people, Hindu as well as Muslim. Rajendra Prasad, further, pointed out the increasing practice among the peoples of the Muslim countries outside India 'to base politics and economics more and more on other considerations than religion. Whatever the Muslim League and the protagonists of Pakistan may say, there is no doubt that the Muslim states of the world today are becoming . . . secular states, just like the Christian countries of Europe. The question is whether Indian Mussalmans will be able to turn the tide of events and establish and maintain the state on any other basis in India.' He further argued that the problem of minorities would become more acute if India was divided into two zones, Hindustan and Pakistan.[57]

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru expressed his views on the scheme of Pakistan in his letter to Dr. S. A. Latif in 1942. He opposed the scheme on the ground that it would disrupt the economic unity of India which was vital for the material well-being of the Indian people as well as for the defence of India since military strength depended on economic strength. The scheme if carried out would make impossible any programme of planned economy for the country so necessary for increasing its productive power and thereby liquidating poverty of the Indian people and, further, for creating civilized standards of material and cultural existence for them. 'It is essential today to have a planned economy for the nation, and for this, as well as for defence, etc. a strong Central Government is necessary.'[58] He further remarked that Pakistan, insufficiently equipped with natural resources, would suffer most, if India was cut up into a number of economies due to political partition.

Pandit Nehru further stated that 'the tendency in the world is for larger federations to come into existence'. The scheme of Pakistan was directed against this tendency. If India was split up, Jawaharlal further argued, into a number of states, these states being small, and therefore relatively weak, would have no future before them except as satellites of larger nations. He was consequently opposed to any division of India. He finally explained the Congress stand thus:

> 'Thus generally speaking, the Congress stands firmly for the unity of India and for a federation with a great deal of autonomy for the units . . . Nevertheless, at Delhi, it made it perfectly clear that if any territorial unit was emphatically and clearly of the opinion that it should break with the Indian Union, it should not be compelled to act contrary to its wishes. Naturally, this would not be welcomed by us, and it would inevitably depend on certain geographical and other factors.'[59]

(b) *Congress Socialist Party*

The Congress Socialist Party, a section of the Indian National Congress, rejected the two-nation theory of the League and opposed the demand of Pakistan in all its suggested various forms. A. Mehta and A. Patwardhan, two prominent leaders of the party, wrote: 'We found the extreme demands of Pakistan to be fraught with incalculable mischief . . . Partition, far from solving it, complicates the Hindu-Muslim problem, and postpones the day of India's political deliverance. It brings no balm for the sores of the body politics but pours upon them acids of disintegration.'[60]

The socialist leaders considered the technique of transplantation of population to make the Muslim and the Hindu areas socially homogeneous as impracticable. Criticizing Dr. Latif's scheme, they remarked: 'But the exchange would affect . . . nearly two-thirds of the total population of India. It will mean uprooting humanity on a scale unattempted in history. It is likely to provoke great popular opposition and cause tremendous misery.'[61]

The leaders were further of opinion that since the existing Indian economy was 'a composite one', the setting up of a number of sovereign states in India would disrupt that economy and be detrimental to the economic interests of the people both of Pakistan and Hindustan.

There would be 'alien' minorities in both Pakistan and Hindustan. The minority problem, Mehta and Patwardhan argued, would then take an accentuated form. They wrote: 'Even after partition, *enclaves* of the other communities will remain in both the Hindu and Muslim states, whose peace and safety will be jeopardized by the ever present danger of *irredentism* . . . the strain of *irredentism* will be inescapable because, even after partition, the League hopes to organize and lead the Muslims left in "Hindustan". The Hindus are sure to counter this demand with a similar claim. Both states will thus be cursed with a well-knit minority of doubtful loyalty to the state. . .'[62]

(c) *Indian Liberals*

The Indian Liberals had already considered the Indian people composed of various communities as a nation. Consequently, the Liberal leaders expressed their opposition to the scheme of Pakistan and the two-nation theory on which it rested. Dr. R. P. Paranjpye remarked: 'Then it must be understood that India of the present day is neither Hindu India nor Muslim India but India and that, therefore, every force which tends towards increasing Indian solidarity should be encouraged and any which tends to alienate the two should be consciously discouraged.'[63]

Sir Chimanlal H. Setalvad met the arguments of Jinnah thus: 'Mr Jinnah asserts that Hindus and Muslims can never form one Indian nation because they neither inter-marry nor dine together and have two different religious philosophies. Why, among the Hindus there are numerous different castes and they do not dine together and inter-marry . . . The Jains, the Buddhists, the Lingayats, the Tamils and Telugus, have different religious philosophies and worship different gods. The Shias and Sunnis have acute religious differences, resulting in sanguinary riots. Are all these to be classed and treated as different nations?'[64]

(d) *Hindu Mahasabha*

The Hindu Mahasabha was the inveterate opponent of the League demand of Pakistan. It was uncompromisingly opposed to the partition of India. V. D. Savarkar, the President of the Hindu Mahasabha, wrote: 'Mother India to us (the Hindus) is one and indivisible. Unity of Hindustan from the Vedic Age down to the present day was an established fact. That being so, the Hindus would never tolerate the partition of India into zones, as demanded by the Muslims. . . .'[65]

Savarkar declared that the Hindus by themselves constituted a nation with the entire India as their national sacred land. He said: ' . . . in India, we Hindus are marked out as an abiding nation by ourselves. Not only do we own a common Fatherland, a Territorial unity, but what is scarcely found anywhere else in the world, we have a common Holy land which is identified with our common Fatherland. This Bharat Bhumi, this Hindustan, India is both our Pitru Bhu and Punya Bhu . . . Then we have common affinities, Cultural, Religious, Historical, Linguistic and Racial, which through the progress of countless centuries of association, and assimilation moulded us into a homogeneous and organic nation.'[66]

By implication, this conception logically led to that of the Indian Muslims also being a separate nation. Savarkar admitted this.

While Savarkar thus recognized the Indian Muslims as nation, he refused to recognize their demand for the Muslim homelands. He reserved Aryavarta or India as the exclusive homeland of the Indian Hindus and dreamt of Hindu Raj. This was illogical.

(e) *Dr. Ambedkar*

Dr Ambedkar propounded his views on the subject of Pakistan in his *Thoughts on Pakistan*. He subscribed to the idealist theory of nation as expounded by Renan who wrote: 'A nation is a living soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One is in the past, the other in the present. One is the common possession of a rich heritage of memories; the other is the actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to preserve worthily the undivided inheritance which has been handed down.'[67]

Dr Ambedkar remarked that, judged by that criterion, the Hindus and the Muslims did not form a nation. They were only 'two armed battalions warring against each other. Their past is a past of mutual destruction—a past of mutual animosities, both in the political as well as in the religious fields . . . The political and religious antagonisms divide the Hindus and Mussalmans far more deeply than the so-called common things able to bind them together.'[68]

He further remarked that the Muslims were not merely a community but a nation, hence a constitution of the Indian state which safeguarded the interests of minority communities would not solve the problem. He described the difference between a community and a nation thus:

> 'The difference comes to this: a community has a right to safeguards, a nation has a right to demand separation . . . To my mind the reasons for this difference pertain to questions of ultimate destiny. . . In a state which is composed of a series of communities, one community may be arrayed against another . . . But in the matter of their

> ultimate destiny they feel they are one. But in a state which is composed of a series of nations, when one nation rises against the other, the conflict is one as to diffences of ultimate destiny . . . All that it (a community) wants is a change in the mode and form of government. . . A nation has to be accorded the right of disruption because it will not be satisfied with mere change in the form of Government. Its quarrel is over the question of ultimate destiny.'[79]

Dr Ambedkar explained the late discovery of the League Muslims that the Indian Muslims were a nation by the fact that 'a group may mistakenly call itself a community even when it has in it the elements of being a nation.'[70]

Dr Ambedkar held the view that no unity was possible between Pakistan and Hindustan. For unity to be real and indissoluble, he remarked, it must be founded on a sense of kinship. It must be spiritual. Since the Muslims were an independent spiritual entity, such a unity was not possible. Ambedkar stated that opposition to the establishment of one Central Government exercising its supremacy over India was the very essence of Pakistan. Pakistan meant the establishment of a separate sovereign state of the Muslims in the Muslim areas.

Dr. Ambedkar held the view that the predominantly Muslim areas could be set up as independent Muslim states. The areas could be made homogeneous by transference of population. He did not consider such transference difficult in view of the modern means and resources and declared that the trouble and expenditure involved would be more than counterbalanced by the advantages of a permanent and effective solution of the complex and momentous problem.

(f) *Communist Party of India*

The Communist Party of India recognized the right of the Muslims in the areas where they preponderated for autonomous state existence and secession. Dr. G. Adhikari, a prominent leader of the party, wrote: 'The demand for Pakistan, if we look at its progressive essence, is in reality the demand for self-determination and separation of the areas of the Muslim nationalities of the Punjab, Pathans, Sind, Baluchistan and of the eastern provinces of Bengal.'[71]

The views of the party on the problem of nationalities and the likely state structure of a free India were embodied in the following section of its Resolution passed at the Party Congress, 1943.

> '(a) Every section of the Indian people which has a contiguous territory as itr homeland, common historical tradition, common language, culture, psychological make-up and common economic life would be recognized as a distinct nationality with the right to exist as an autonomous state within the free Indian union or federation and will have the right to secede from it if it may so desire. This means that the territories which are homelands of such nationalities and which today are split up by the artificial boundaries of the present British provinces and of the so-called "Indian States" would be reunited and restored to them in free India. Thus the free India of tomorrow would be a federation or a union of autonomous states of the various nationalities such as the Pathans, Western Punjabis (dominantly Muslims), Sikhs, Sindhis, Hindustanis, Rajasthanis, Gujeratis, Bengalis, Assamese, Biharis, Oriyas, Andhras, Tamils, Karnatakis, Maharashtrians, Keralas, etc.
>
> '(b) If there are interspersed minorities in the new states thus formed, their rights regarding their culture, language, education, etc., would be guaranteed by statute. . . .
>
> '(4) Such a declaration of rights inasmuch as it concedes to every nationality as defined above, and therefore to nationalities having Muslim faith, the right of autonomous state existence and of secession, can form the basis for unity between the National Congress and the League. For this would give to the Muslims wherever they are in an overwhelming majority in a contiguous territory which is their homeland, the right to form their autonomous states and even to separate if they so desire. . . . Such a declaration, therefore, concedes the just essence of the Pakistan demand.
>
> '(5) But the recognition of the right of separation in this form need not necessarily lead to actual separation. On the other hand, by dispelling mutual suspicions, it brings about unity of action today and lays the basis for a greater unity in the free India of tomorrow. National unity forged on the basis of such a declaration and strengthened in the course of joint struggle in the defence of our motherland is bound to convince the peoples of all Indian nationalities of the urgent need to stick together and to form a free Indian Union or Federation in which each National State would be a free and equal member with right to secede. They will see this as the only path of protecting the freedom and democracy achieved. . . .'[72]

Dr. Adhikari attributed the growth of the movements of nationalities in India to the growth of the spirit of nationalism and spread of the nationalist movement among the Indian masses. He remarked that the all-India nationalist movement, 'is spreading to every nook and corner of India and bringing the peasant masses of the most backward nationalities and communities into its vortex. The all-India national movement for the country's emancipation is growing into a rich pattern of a multi-national movement. The common goal of India's political and economic emancipation is being seen through the waking eyes of individual consciousness."[73]

We have now stated the attitudes and views of various political organizations and groups in the country on the problem of the most important minority in the country, that of the Indian Muslims with special reference to the system of communal electorate, special representation, and the scheme of Pakistan put forth by the Muslim League based on the conception that the Indian Muslims as a whole constituted a nation.

The problem of nationalities and minorities almost occupied the central place in Indian national politics after 1930. Fierce controversies took place over it and strong political passions were roused when dealing with it.

A proper comprehension of that problem in the context of the objective historical development of the Indian society and its developmental tendencies, alone, could help to visualize the specific socio-historical conditions under which only a progressive solution of the problem could be achieved.

Problem of Nationalities. Prerequisites or Its Progressive Solution

A social problem arises from the social and specific social situation. The problem could be solved only if the social conditions which gave rise to it were removed.

The problem of nationalities had emerged as the result of the political awakening of 'dormant' nationality groups, living a common economic life, speaking a common language, and possessing a common culture. The movements of those nationalities embodied their urge for adequate territorial integration and the free development of their economic life, language, and culture, which was obstructed under the conditions of the British rule.

The first prerequisite for the solution of the problem was, therefore, the removal of the obstacle, in the form of the British rule, to the free development of these nationalities and, further, the grant of the right of self-determination to the point of secession to them.

We have still to consider whether freedom from the British rule and the acquisition of the right of self-determination were sufficient for a progressive solution of the problem of nationalities.

A survey of the world history for the last two hundred years shows that mere national independence for a people is not sufficient for a successful solution of the nationality problem. In Austria, Hungary, in the countries of the Balkan peninsula, the problem of nationalities agitated and remained unsolved for the free nations of those countries.

This was due to the fact that a complete solution of the problem of nationalities was not possible within the framework of the capitalist economic structure of society.

Capitalist society is based on competitive struggle between nation and nation, also between nationalities within the same country. Further, due to the law of uneven development, capitalist nations as well as nationalities which are developing on a capitalist economic basis, are of unequal economic strength. Due to the very capitalist organization of the national and world economy, these nations and nationalities perennially, struggle for markets, raw materials, and zones of capital investment.

This breeds wars, animosities, oppression and enslavement of peoples.

Powerful capitalist nations, in search for markets and raw materials, build up colonial empires and subjugate nations. Nationalities within the same country, developing on a capitalist economic basis, carry on a competitive struggle among themselves, also with the rest of the world, for capitalist economic ends. These struggles especially sharpen in the epoch of imperialism, of the general capitalist decline. This does not breed any solidarity feeling between the nations of the world but engenders national animosities, imperialist wars, and national independence struggles of the subject peoples. The world remains a cauldron of fratricidal struggle between man and man.

Inter-nation and inter-nationality struggles are inherent in the capitalist organization of society. The struggle can be eliminated if society is reconstructed from a competitive to a co-operative basis, i.e. on a socialist economic foundation.

Capitalism is based on competition and production for profit. It, therefore, divides humanity into hostile nations, and nations into belligerent nationality groups and classes. Socialism is based on co-operation and production for use. It, therefore, helps to integrate humanity into a co-operative community, establishes fraternal relations between nations as well as among nationalities. Under socialism, there are no capitalist groups within nations or nationalities, who, driven by the very iron law of competition and economic necessity, foment international and inter-nationality animosities among their peoples, using these animosities to serve their sectional interests such as the expansion of markets, the acquisition of sources of raw materials, and others. Free nationalities, organized on a socialist economic basis, enter into a voluntary union for the purpose of fraternal collaboration.

Thus, socialism not only ends the subjection of one class by another within a nation or a nationality but also paves way for collaboration between nations and nationalities.

The problem of minorities also can be completely solved only under the conditions of socialist national existence. A democratic constitution in a free India can guarantee civil liberties and other rights for minorities. But under the conditions of the capitalist economic development of backward communities, their bourgeoisies and professional classes would be generally tempted to utilize the awakening of the masses of their communities in their mutual struggles over trading and industrial interests, and also jobs and posts. This was bound to generate communalism and communal hatred and conflicts in the country.

Socialism, which ends the class structure of society, ends sectional struggles among the bourgeoisie also and paves way for peaceful and co-operative relations between communities as between nations and nationalities.

National independence for the Indian people, the right of self-determination to nationalities, and the establishment of a socialist economic system, were the prerequisites for a complete solution of the problem of nationalities and minorities.

'Even if imperialism were overthrown, the problem of over-coming the social forces which give rise to careerism or communalism has to be faced. It is here that socialism presents itself as the solution of the problem. Democracy presents itself as inseparable from socialism. It is here that the struggle against Indian capitalists and feudalists begins. The question of nationality is inseparable from existence. It is a subsidiary problem of social revolution. It could not be dealt with in isolation from questions of the domination of capital. . . .'[74]

References

1 Refer Carr and Macartney.
2 Winternitz, p. 6.
3 Stalin, p. 8.
4 Refer Macartney and Carr.
5 Stalin, p. 7.
6 Krishna, p. 18.
7 Refer Carr.
8 Refer Krishna.
9 Refer W. C. Smith, p. 1.
10 Graham, p. 58.
11 Quoted in Parulekar, 'The Future of Islam in India'; *Asia*, Vol XXVIII. No. 11 (Nov. 1928), p. 874.
12 Quoted in R. P. Dutt, p. 389.
13 Hunter, p. 156.
14 W. C. Smith, p. 22.
15 Wilson, p. 188.
16 Graham, p. 178.
17 Quoted by Graham, p. 273.
18 Quoted by Krishna, p. 97.
19 Refer W. C. Smith.
20 ibid., p. 201.
21 Bucan, p. 244.
22 Morley, p. 325.
23 Refer A. Mehta and A. Patwardhan, p. 28.
24 Lord Olivier, letter to *The Times*, 10 July, 1926.
25 Quoted by Krishna, p. 90.
26 Krishna, p. 314.
27 ibid., p. 85.
28 ibid., p. 132.
29 ibid., p. 133.
30 ibid., p. 131.
31 ibid., p. 72.
32 Lord Cromer, p. 126-7.
33 W. C. Smith, p. 225.
34 *India in* 1919.
35 Krishna, p. 266.
36 Quoted by A. Mehta and A. Patwardhan, p. 38.

37 Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, p. 86.
38 R. P. Dutt, p. 418.
39 Krishna, p. 278.
40 ibid., p. 296.
41 Refer Pattabhi Sitaramayya.
42 Quoted by A. Mehta and A. Patwardhan, p. 43.
43 Refer Ansari in *Tribune*, 21 March 1942.
44 Mashriqui quoted by W. C. Smith, p. 278.
45 Allah Bux reported in *Tribune*, 10 October 1942.
46 *India's Problem of Her Future Constitution*, p. 103.
47 Iqbal, p. 10.
48 Jinnah, p. 12.
49 ibid., pp. 13-14.
50 Refer Ashraf, pp. 78-9.
51 Refer Fischer, pp. 36-7.
52 ibid., pp. 34-5.
53 Refer Ashraf, p. 75.
54 ibid., pp. 82-3.
55 ibid., pp. 93.
56 Rajendra Prasad, pp. 6-7.
57 Refer Rajendra Prasad, (2), pp. 319-21.
58 Refer Dr. Nazir Yar Jung, p. 211.
59 ibid., p. 119.
60 Refer A. Mehta and A. Patwardhan, p. 211.
61 ibid., p. 213.
62 ibid., p. 219.
63 Dr R. P. Paranjpye, quoted by Dr Ashraf, pp. [illegible]4-5.
64 Sir C. Setalvad, quoted by Dr Ashraf, p. 61.
65 V. D. Savarkar, quoted by Dr Ashraf, pp. 40-1.
66 V. D. Savarkar, quoted by Dr Ambedkar, p. 135.
67 Quoted by Dr Ambedkar, p. 29.
68 Dr Ambedkar, p. 30.
69 ibid., pp. 329-30.
70 ibid., pp. 337-8.
71 Dr G. Adhikari, p. 36.
72 ibid., pp. 15-16.
73 ibid., p. 4.
74 Krishna, pp. 346-7.

EPILOGUE

Nationalism In India, Its Chief Phases

We have narrated the history of the rise of Indian nationalism, and seen how it was the product of the action and interaction of the numerous objective and subjective social forces and factors which evolved in the historical process during the British period. We have explained why the emotion of nationalism did not and could not evolve among the Indian people in the economic environs and cultural climate of pre-British India. We have delineated the fundamental economic transformation of Indian society during the British period, which was one of the most important material prerequisites for welding the disunited Indian people into a single nation. We have also assessed the specific weight and described the role of other factors like modern transport, new education, press, and others, in contributing towards the unification of the Indian people and in engendering a nationalist consciousness among them.

Indian nationalism passed through various phases of development. As it advanced from one phase to another its social basis broadened, its objective became more clearly defined and bold, and its forms of expression more varied. As a result of the impact of forces of Indian and world development, increasing strata of the Indian people evolved a national consciousness and outlook and were drawn into the orbit of the nationalist movement. This national awakening found expression in varied spheres of national life, social, political, cultural.

Further, we have seen how the nationalist movement grew and gathered strength as new classes, offsprings of the new economic structure and living under the same state regime, finding their free and full development thwarted under the extant social and political conditions, increasingly organized themselves on a national scale and started various movements to remove the obstacles impeding their growth

First Phase

In its first phase, Indian nationalism had a very narrow social basis. The intelligentsia who were the product of the modern education imparted in the new educational institutions, established by the British in India in the first decades of the nineteenth century, and who had studied western culture and greatly assimilated its democratic and nationalist ideas, formed the first stratum of the Indian society to develop a national consciousness and aspirations. Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his group of enlightened Indians were the pioneers of Indian nationalism. They were the exponents of the concept of the Indian nation which they propagated among the people. They initiated socio-reform and religio-reform movements which represented endeavours to remould the Indian society and religion in the spirit of the new principles of democracy, rationalism, and nationalism. In fact, these movements were the expression of the rising national democratic consciousness among a section of the Indian people.

These founders and first fighters of Indian nationalism stood up for democratic rights, such as the freedom of the Press, and put forth demands like the right of the nation to have a voice in the administration of the country.

Second Phase

The first phase extended till 1885 and culminated in the rise of the Indian National Congress in that year. The second phase roughly covered the period from 1885 to 1905.

The Liberal intelligentsia who were at the helm of the Congress were the leaders of the Indian nationalist movement during the second phase. Their ideology and methods determined the programme and forms of the movement which reflected the interests of the development of the new bourgeois society in India. The social basis of the movement was extended during this period to the educated middle class which, by the end of nineteenth century, had appreciably grown as a result of the expansion of modern education, and to a section of the merchant class which had developed during this period as a result of the growth of Indian and international trade. Modern industries also grew steadily during this period as a result of which the class of industrialists emerged and began to gain strength. They started orienting towards the Congress which adopted the programme of industrialization of the country and in 1905 organized actively the Swadeshi campaign.

The Indian National Congress, under the leadership of the Liberals, mainly voiced the demands of the educated classes and the trading bourgeoisie such as the Indianization of Services, the association of the Indians with the administrative machinery of the state, the stoppage of economic drain, and others formulated in the resolutions of the Indian National Congress. It also set forth such democratic demands as those of representative institutions and civil liberties. Its methods of struggle dominated by Liberal conceptions were principally constitutional agitation, effective argument, and fervent appeal to the democratic conscience and traditions of the British people.

Since the British government did not satisfy the most vital demands of the Indian nationalist movement, disillusionment set in among a section of the nationalists regarding the ideology and methods of the Liberals. A group, with a new philosophy, political ideology, and conception of the methods of struggle, crystallized within the Congress.

Increasing unemployment among the educated middle class youths due to the inability of the social and state apparatus to incorporate them and further, economic misery among the people due to devastating epidemics and famines at the close of the nineteenth century, created favourable conditions for the growth of the influence of the new group, the Extremists. Various unpopular measures during the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon, such as the Indian Universities Act and the Partition of Bengal, further estranged the people from the government and made the politically conscious middle class rally round the Extremists who possessed such capable and self-sacrificing leaders as Tilak, Aurobindo Ghose. B. C. Pal, and Lajpat Rai. By 1905, even some of the Liberals began to lose faith in the British government. However, they did not renounce their political philosophy and methodology of struggle.

The ideology of the Extremists was, in vital respects, the antithesis of that of the Liberals.

While the Liberals had a profound faith in the mission of Britain to raise the Indian people to a high level of progressive social, political, and cultural existence, the Extremists interpreted the British rule in India as the means of the British to keep the Indian people in a state of subjection and economically exploit them. Further, while the Liberals glorified the western culture, the Extremists harked back to India's past, idealized the ancient Hindu culture and desired to resuscitate it.

Again the Extremists had no faith in the political efficacy of the Liberal method of appealing to British democracy. Instead, to secure a demand, they stood for organizing extra-parliamentary pressure on the government such as the Boycott campaign. The Extremists were also not satisfied merely with the demand of administrative reform but set forth the goal of self-government which was endorsed by the Liberals in 1906.

Political discontent, during the second phase, also expressed itself in the growth of the terrorist movement. A small section of nationalist youths organized themselves in terrorist bands and relied upon such methods as assassination of individual officials and sometimes fomenting of mutinies in the army for achieving political freedom.

Third Phase

The third phase in the development of the nationalist movement extended from 1905 to 1918. During this phase, the Liberals were supplanted by the Extremists as the leaders of the nationalist movement.

In spite of the strong government repression, the nationalist movement registered an advance. The political propaganda of the Extremists instilled a feeling of national self-respect and self-confidence among the people who, instead of looking to the British for political freedom as counselled by the Liberals, began to rely on their own strength for achieving it. The movement, however, suffered from the defect that its leaders attempted to base it on a resurrected Hindu philosophy. This, to some extent, mystified the movement and weakened its secular character. It was also one of the reasons why it could not appeal to the Muslims.

During the third phase, the Indian nationalist movement became militant and challenging, and acquired a wider social basis by the inclusion of sections of the lower-middle class. The agitation for Home Rule during wartime further strengthened the political consciousness of the people.

It was during this phase that sections of upper class Muslims developed political consciouness and founded their all-India political organization in 1906, the Muslim League. Due to a number of reasons, the rising political consciousness of the Muslim upper and educated middle classes took a communal form, and resulted in the formation of their organization on a communal basis.

Fourth Phase

The fourth phase in the evolution of the Indian nationalist movement commenced from 1918 and extended roughly up to the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-4.

One striking development during this phase was that the nationalist movement gained a broad mass basis and added to its arsenal the weapon of direct mass action.

The nationalist movement, which was hitherto restricted mainly to upper and middle classes, further extended, during this phase, to sections of the Indian masses.

There were a number of factors which brought about national awakening among the Indian masses during the years immediately succeeding the war. The post-war economic crisis, the disillusionment about the government promises, and the increased repression by the state, had seriously affected the people including the peasantry and the working-class and they were in a state of great ferment.

The great events in the international world such as, a number of democratic revolutions in European countries and the socialist revolution in Russia, had deeply stirred the consciousness of the Indian people. The Home Rule agitation during wartime also had the effect of intensifying and extending political consciousness among the Indian people. The Treaty of Sevres had offended the Indian Muslims also creating thereby the pre-condition for a united nationalist mass movement.

The Indian capitalists who had become economically stronger during the war as a result of industrial expansion, also, more actively than before, supported the Indian National Congress and the N.C.O. Movement started by the latter. The Swadeshi and Boycott slogans of the Congress objectively served the interests of industrialists who financially supported it. Gandhi's doctrine of class harmony and social peace and his support to the Swadeshi resolution at the Calcutta Congress in 1919 made sections of the Indian bourgeoisie support Gandhi, the Congress, and the nationalist movements organized by the Congress under Gandhi's leadership, from this time onward. It was from 1918 that the Indian industrial bourgeoisie began to exert a powerful influence in determining the programme, policies, strategies, tactics, and forms of struggle, of the Indian nationalist movement led by the Congress of which Gandhi was the leader.

Another development during this phase was the growth of socialist and communist groups in the country. By 1928, these groups succeeded in initiating independent political and trade union movements of the working class based on the doctrine of class struggle. They further stood for a socialist state of India declaring it as the objective of the Indian national movement. While in the Non-Co-operation Movement, politically conscious workers, who participated in it, lacked an independent class programme, after 1926 those who joined movements like the Simon Commission Boycott and others did so with their own slogans and flag, and frequently under their own leaders. Thus, after 1926, the Indian working class increasingly entered the nationalist movement as an independent political unit. This was a new phenomenon in the history of the nationalist movement.

It was during this period that the Congress defined its political objective from the nebulous term Swaraj to that of Independence. Various Youth and Independence Leagues which sprang up in the country also adopted Independence as their political goal.

Parallel to these developments, reactionary communal forces also began to organize themselves during this period. The period witnessed a number of communal riots.

The phase culminated in the Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-4) organized by the Congress under the leadership of Gandhi. It was the second mass movement in the history of Indian nationalism.

The principal gains to the Indian nationalist movement during this phase were the acquisition of a mass basis, the definition of its goal as Independence, the entry of a section of the working class into the movement as an independent political force, the growth of various Youth and Independence Leagues, and the wider participation of peasants in the movement. The factors which had a retarding influence on the movement were mainly, the combining of religion with politics by Gandhi with the result that the national consciousness was befogged and national movement confused; the increased grip of the capitalists over the Congress organization and the resultant modulation of its programme and policies to serve their sectional interest at the expense of national advance; and the accentuation of communal feelings.

Fifth Phase

The next phase covers the period from 1934 to 1939, the year of the outbreak of World War II. There were a number of new developments during this period. A section of Congressmen lost their confidence in the ideology, programmes and methods of Gandhi and formed the Congress Socialist Party, which stood for the organization of the workers and peasants on class lines, and making them the motive force of the nationalist movement. The party, however, remained heterogeneous, being composed of groups who broke from Gandhism in varying degrees and having a petti-bourgeois social basis. There also grew up other dissident tendencies from Gandhism like the Forward Bloc led by Subhas Bose.

Another development was the steady growth of the movements of the depressed classes. The Muslim League also, organizationally and politically, grew stronger in the final years of this period. Further, a number of other Muslim organizations, both of nationalist and communal political hues, also sprang up.

The rapid growth of the Communist Party increasingly spreading its influence among students, workers, and kisans, also was another significant development.

The rapid growth of the peasant movement was one of the striking developments during this period. Larger and larger sections of peasantry developed national and class consciousness. Further, they began to evolve their own class organizations, class leadership, programmes, slogans, and flag. Hitherto, the politically awakened peasants had followed the Congress leadership; henceforth, a large section of them followed its own leaders, put forth their own class demands including those of the abolition of landlordism itself and the repudiation of all debts. The All-India Kisan Sabha, the organization of the conscious section of the Indian peasantry, formulated for its objective the socialist state of India. It organized independent struggles of the kisans and joined the nationalist movement as an independent unit.

Another remarkable development during this phase was the growth of the democratic struggle of the people of the Indian states with a programme of demands such as the abolition of state monopoly, representative institutions, civil liberties, and others. The states' peoples' movement was mainly controlled by the merchant class of these states. The Indian National Congress supported and aided the struggle of the people of these states.

Another development of importance during this period was the growing awakening among the nationalities constituting the Indian people.

This awakening was reflected in their demand of the reconstitution of provinces on a linguistic basis. The movements of such nationalities as the Andhras, the Oriyas, the Karnatakis, and others, which had awakened to life and which felt and expressed the urge to be integrated into distinct political administrative zones based on common language, revealed this new development.

The rise of an independent kisan movement, the growth of socialist forces, the movements of awakened nationalities, and other developments, however, still represented only minority tendencies within the nationalist movement. The national movement still remained essentially determined and dominated by the Gandhian outlook and Gandhi's political philosophy and leadership. It still, in the main, reflected the interests of the capitalists and other upper classes.

However, the new forces and movements had begun to exert some pressure on the Indian National Congress as a result of which the latter included in its programme a charter of fundamental rights guaranteeing civil liberties and alleviatory economic measures to the workers and peasants. The Indian National Congress, the premier national organization in the country and the principal leader of the nationalist movement, also recognized the cultural and other aspirations of awakened nationalities, stood for cultural autonomy and linguistic provinces and even recognized the right of the populations of the provinces reconstituted on the linguistic basis to secede from the Indian Federation of the future free India if they so desired.

However, a struggle, increasingly sharpening, went on among the various social classes within the nationalist movement for the hegemony of the movement. The political groups representing workers, kisans, and left sections of the middle classes, were striving more and more, as they gathered more political consciousness and independent organizational strength. to influence the programme and policies of the Congress which had hitherto been appreciably controlled by the capitalist class. The awakened nationalities were also pressing more and more vigorously their demands for the removal of the obstacles which thwarted their free and full development.

Perspective

The influx of new social forces with increasingly growing consciousness in the nationalist movement and their pressure on the leadership, however, did not weaken the movement. It brought more dynamic energy to the movement. Whether in the next stage, the Indian nationalist movement would be controlled by the capitalist class mainly rejecting its views and interests as it had hitherto happened or its leadership would pass to the new social classes making the movement express the interests of these classes as also the cultural and other aspirations of nationalities and minority groups, would be largely determined by the objective developments both in the Indian and international worlds and by the relation of forces of these classes and groups and the level of their consciousness and organizational strength.

In this context, we will finally reproduce the following prognosis which we made during the intra-war period in the First Edition of the book.

"However, considering that the Indian capitalist class appreciably added to its economic and social strength during the period of the Present World War II and is led by a group of politicians who possess great experience and consummate political and strategic talent, in contrast to the awakened lower layers of the Indian society who are culturally backward, organizationally weaker, and politically less conscious than the bourgeoisie, and further, are led by groups of persons smaller in political stature and experience, it is very likely that, in its immediate next stage, the Indian nationalist movement will be dominated by and made to subserve the interests of the capitalist class.

"The direction of development of Indian history and the nationalist movement, in the next phase led by and subserving the interests of the capitalist class, can be broadly indicated.

"The first feature of this development will be the working out of the policy of 'Concessions and Counterpoise' by British Imperialism on a much grander scale in the changed historical situation, to win over increased sections of the vested interests for its support, and also to stimulate more bitter rivalries among them to its advantage. This will result in a more intensified struggle among these sections and will accentuate communalism and interprovincial antagonisms.

"The second feature of the development will consist in that the leaders of the vested interests will oppose mass movements of the lower strata of the population or will distort and canalize these movements for gaining concessions from British Imperialism as well as from sectional rivals.

"Constitutionalism, sharpened communalism, accentuated interprovincial rivalries, and opposition to or increased distortion of growing mass struggles by the leaders of the vested interests are likely to be the principal characteristics of the next phase of Indian development."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GENERAL

ADHIKARI, G., *Pakistan and National Unity* (1944).

AGA KHAN, *India in Transition* (1918).

AHMAD, Z. A., *The Agrarian Problem in India* (1936).

AIYER, SIR P. S. S., *Indian Constitutional Problems* (1928).

ALTEKAR, A. S., *History of Village Communities in India* (1926).

AMBEDKAR, B. R.,
  1. *Thoughts on Pakistan* (1941).
  2. *Castes in India* (1917).
  3. *Annihilation of Caste* (1936).

ANDREWS AND MOOKERJEE, *The Rise and Growth of the Congress* (1938).

ANSTEY, VERA, *The Economic Development of India* (1937).

ARTHUR, SIR G., *Life of Lord Kitchener* (1920).

ASHRAF, K. M. (Ed.), *Pakistan* (1940).

AIYANGAR, S. K., *Ancient India and the South Indian History and Culture* (1941).

BADEN POWELL, *Land Systems of British India* (1882).

BANERJEE, D. N., *Early Land Revenue System in Bengal and Bihar* (1936).

BANERJEE, SIR SURENDRA NATH, *Speeches and Writings.*

BARAKATULLA, MOHAMED, *The Khilafat* (1922).

BARKER, SIR ERNEST,
  1. *National Character* (1927).
  2. *Ideas and Ideals of the British Empire* (1941).
  3. *Reflections on Government* (1942).

BARNS, H. E.,
  1. *Society in Transition* (1940).
  2. *Sociology and Political Theory* (1925)

BARNES, LEONARD,

1. *Empire or Democracy* (1939).
2. *Soviet Light on the Colonies* (1944).

BARNS, MARGARITA,

1. *The Indian Press* (1940).
2. *India To-day and To-morrow* (1937).

BASU, MAJOR, B. D.,

1. *The Ruin of Indian Trade and Industries* (1935).
2. *The Rise of Christian Power in India* (1931).
3. *India under the British Crown* (1933).

BEAUCHAMP, JOAN, *British Imperialism in India* (1935).

BENN, A. W., *A History of Modern Philosophy* (1933).

BESANT, ANNIE, *How India Wrought for Freedom* (1915).

BEVAN, EDWIN, *Indian Nationalism* (1913).

BOLTS, WILLIAM, *Considerations on Indian Affairs* (1772).

BOSE, SUBHAS CHANDRA, *The Indian Struggle* (1934).

BRAILSFORD, H. N., *Subject India* (1943).

BRIFFAULT, ROBERT, *The Decline and the Fall of the British Empire* (1938).

BRIJNARAYAN, *India in the Crisis* (1935).

BROOKS, ADAMS, *The Law of Civilization and Decay.*

BRYCE, JAMES, *Modern Democracies* (1921).

BUCAN, J.. *Lord Minto.*

BUCH, M. A.,

1. *Rise and Growth of Indian Liberalism* (1938).
2. *Rise and Growth of Indian Militant Nationalism* (1940).
3. *Rise and Growth of Indian Nationalism* (1939).

BUCHANAN, D. H., *The Development of Capitalist Enterprise in India* (1934).

BURGESS, JAMES, *The Chronology of Modern India* (1913).

CALVERTON, V. F., *The Awakening of America* (1939)

CARR, E. H. (*Chairman, Study Group*), *Nationalism* (1939).

CAUDWELL, C., *Studies in a Dying Culture* (1938).

CHAUDHARI, N. C., *Defence of India* (1935).

CHINTAMANI, C. Y., *Indian Politics since the Mutiny* (1937).

CHIROL, V.,

1. *Indian Unrest* (1910).
2. *India* (1926).

CHUDGAR, P. L., *Indian Princes under British Protection* (1929).

Congress Presidential Addresses (1935).

Cotton, Sir Henry, *New India or India in Transition* (1904).

Coupland, Reginald, *The Constitutional Problem in India* (1944).

Cunningham, W., *Growth of English Commerce and Industries in Modern Times* (1882).

Mehta, A. and Patwardhan, A., *The Communal Triangle in India* (1942).

Mehta, J. M., *A Study of Rural Economy of Gujarat.*

Menon, Lakshmi, N., *The Position of Women* (1944).

Mill, James, *History of British India* (1848).

Mill, John Stuart, *Representative Government* (1867).

Mitchell, Kate, *Industrialization of the Western Pacific* (1942).

Mitra, N. N. (Ed.), *Indian Annual Registers* (Annual Publication).

Mohammad Noman, *Muslim India* (1942).

Montagu, E. S., *An Indian Diary* (1930).

Mookerji, Radha Kumud, *Fundamental Unity of India* (1926).

Moreland, W. H., *Agrarian System of Muslim India* (1929).

Morley, John, *Recollections*, Vol. II (1918).

Morrison, Theodore, *The Economic Transition in India* (1914).

Mukerjee, Radha Kamal, *Land Problems in India* (1933).

Mukerji, D. P., *Modern Indian Culture* (1942).

Muller, Max, *Biographical Essays* (1884).

Mustafa, Khan, *An Apology for the New Light* (1891).

Naoroji, Dadabhoy,

1. *Speeches and Writings* (1910).
2. *Poverty and un-British Rule in India* (1876).

Nash, V., *The Great Famine* (1900).

Natarajan, M. S., *Famine* (1944).

Natarajan, S., *Social Problems* (1942).

Nazir, Yar Jung (Ed.), *The Pakistan Issue* (1943).

Nehru, Jawaharlal, *An Autobiography* (1936).

Nehru, Motilal, (Chairman). *Nehru Committee Report* (1928).

Nehru, Rameshwari, *The Harijan Movement* (1940).

Nehru, Shaymkumari, (Ed.), *Our Cause.*

Nehru, S. S., *Caste and Credit in a Rural Area* (1942).

Nurullah, Syed, and Naik, J. P., *History of Education in India* (1943).

OAKESHOTT, M., *The Social and Political Doctrines of Contemporary Europe* (1939).

O'MALLEY (Ed.), *Modern India and the West* (1941)

PAL, B. C.,
  1. *The New Spirit* (1907).
  2. *Memories of my Life and Times* (1932).

PALEKAR, S. A., *Trade of India* (1943).

PARANJPYE, M. R., *A Source-book of Modern Indian Education* (938).

PARANJPYE, R. P., *The Crux of the Indian Problem* (1931).

PARULEKAR, R. V., *Literacy in India* (1940).

'PUNJABI', *The Confederacy of India.*

PURCELL and HALLSWORTH, *Report on Labour Conditions in India* (1928).

PURDY, M. G., *The South African Indian Problem* (1943).

RAJENDRA PRASAD,
  1. *Pakistan* (1940).
  2. *India Divided* (1946).

RAMCHANDRA RAO, P. R., *Decay of Indian Industries* (1935).

RANADE, M. G., *Essays on Indian Economics* (1898).

RANGAIYER, C. S., *India in the Crucible* (1928).

RANGA, N. G.,
  1. *Kisan Speaks* (1937).
  2. *The Modern Indian Peasant* (1936).
  3. *Peasants and Congress* (1938).
  4. *Kisan Handbook* (1938).
  5. *History of Kisan Movement* (1939).

RAY, P. C., *Life and Times of C. R. Das* (1937).

RICHEY, J. A., *Selections from the Educational Records*, Parts I and II (1922).

RISLEY, SIR H. H., *The People of India* (1915).

ROCKER, R., *Nationalism and Culture* (1937).

RONALEDSHAY, LORD, *Life of Lord Curzon*, Vol. II (1928).

ROY, M. N.,
  1. *India In Transition* (1922).
  2. *Historical Role of Islam* (1938).
  3. *Materialism* (1940).

ROY, RAJA RAM MOHAN, *English Works* (1906).

RUSHBROOK, WILLIAMS, *What About India?*

SANTHANAM, K., *The Cry of Distress* (1943).

SARGENT, J., *Progress of Education in India* (1940).

Schiff, Leonard, *The Present Condition of India* (1939)

Seal, Brajendra Nath, *Raja Ram Mohan Roy.*

Seeley, J. R., *Expansion of England* (1883).

Senart, M., *Caste in India* (1930).

Sahajanand, Swami, *The Other Side of the Shield* (1938).

Shah, K. T., *Why Pakistan?—Why Not?* (1940)

Shelvankar, K. S., *The Problem of India* (1940).

Shiva Rao, *The Industrial Worker in India* (1939).

Sitaramayya, P., *The History of the Indian National Congress* (1935).

Smith, W. C., *Modern Islam in India* (1943).

Smith, W. Roy, *Nationalism and Reform in India* (1938).

Soni, H. R., *Indian Transport* (1935).

Spratt, Philip, *Gandhism* (1939).

Stalin, Joseph, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question.*

Stratchey, Sir John, *India, Its Administration and Progress* (1903).

Sun Yat Sen, *San Min Chu I* (1929).

Tagore, Rabindra Nath, *Nationalism* (1917).

Tagore, Saumendra Nath,

1. *Gandhism and the Labour-Peasant Problem* (1940).
2. *Bourgeois Democratic Revolution and India* (1939).

Tawney, R. H., *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (1929).

Temple, Sir R., *Men and Events of My Time in India* (1882).

Thomas, F. W., *History and Prospects of British Education in India* (1891).

Thompson, E., and Garratt, G., *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India* (1935).

Thompson, E., *Reconstruction of India* (1930).

Trevelyan, C. E., *The Education of the People of India* (1838).

Varga, E., *The Great Crisis* (1934).

Vijayaraghavachari, Sir T., *Land and its Problems* (1944).

Visvesvaraya, Sir M., *Planned Economy for India* (1934).

Vivekanand, Swami, *From Colombo to Almora, Seventeen Lectures* (1897).

Wadia, P. A., and Joshi, G. N., *Wealth of India* (1925).

Wadia, P. A., and Merchant, K. T.,

1. *Our Economic Problem* (1943).
2. *Modern Times* (1882).

DARLING, M. L.,
1. *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt* (1925).
2. *Rusticus Loquitur* (1930).

DAS, C. R.,
1. *Speeches.*
2. *India for Indians* (1921).

DAS, R. K., *The Labour Movement in India* (1923).

DATTA, D., *Landlordism in India* (1931).

DIGBY, W., *Prosperous British India* (1902).

DOBB, M., *An Outline of European History* (1925).

DONOGH, W. R., *The History and Law of Sedition.*

DUTT, R. C., *Economic History of British India under British Rule* (1901).

DUTT, R. P., *India To-day* (1940).

DUTT, SUKUMAR, *The Problem of Indian Nationality* (1926).

EDIB, HALIDE, *Inside India* (1937).

EDWARDS and MERIVALE, *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence* (1872).

ENGELS, F., *Peasant War in Germany.*

EZEKIEL, I. A., *Swaraj or Surrender* (1931).

FEATHERSTONE, H. L., *A Century of Nationalism* (1939).

FISCHER, LOUIS, *A Week with Gandhi* (1943).

FOX, RALPH, *Colonial Policy of British Imperialism* (1933).

GADGIL, D. R., *The Industrial Evolution of India in Recent Times* (1933).

GANDHI, DEVADAS (Ed.), *India Unreconciled* (1943).

GANDHI, M. K.,
1. *Autobiography* (1940).
2. *Speeches and Writings.*
3. *Satyagraha* (1935).

GARRATT, G. T., *An Indian Commentary* (1930).

GHOSE, A. K., *Public Administration in India* (1930).

GHOSE, AUROBINDO, *Bal Gangadhar Tilak* (1919).

GHOSE, N. N., *Kristodas Pal* (1887).

GHURYE, G. S., *Caste and Race in India* (1932).

GILCHRIST, R. N., *Indian Nationality* (1930).

GOKHALE, G. K., *Speeches* (1920).

GOOCH, G. P., *Nationalism* (1920).

GRAHAM, G. F. I., *The Life and Works of Sir Syed Ahmed* (1909).

GRANT, J. B., *Health of India* (1943).

GUHA, B. S., *Racial Elements in the Population* (1944).

GYAN CHAND, *India's Teeming Millions* (1939).

HARDIE, KERR, *India* (1909).

HAYES, C. J. H., *Essays on Nationality* (1928).

HARTOG, SIR P., *Some Aspects of Indian Education, Past and Present* (1939).

HAVELL, E. B., *A Short History of India* (1924).

HEBER, BISHOP, *Memoirs and Correspondence* (1830).

HOBHOUSE, L. T., *Liberalism* (1923).

HOBSON, J. A., *Imperialism* (1938).

HOLDERNESS, SIR T., *Peoples and Problems of India* (1911).

HOUSTON, F. M., and BEDI, D. B. P. L., *India Analysed*, Vols. I-IV (1933).

HOYLAND, J. S.,

1. *Indian Dawn* (1934).
2. *Gopal Krishna Gokhale, His Life and Speeches* (1933).

HUNTER, W. W., *The Indian Musalmans* (1871).

HUTCHINSON, LESTER, *The Empire of the Nabobs* (1937).

INDIA LEAGUE DELEGATION, *Report on the Conditions of India* (1934).

'INDIAN MAHOMEDAN', *British India, from Queen Elizabeth to Lord Reading* (1926).

IQBAL, SIR M., *Six Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (1930).

JAIN, L. C., *Indian Economy during the War* (1944).

JATHAR and BERI, *Indian Economics* (1937).

JAYASWAL, K. P., *History of India* (1935).

JINNAH, M. A., *Presidential Address* (1937).

JOSEPH, B., *Nationality, Its Nature and Problems* (1929).

KABIR, HUMAYUN, *Muslim Politics* (1944).

KAY, SIR JOHN and MALLESON, COLONEL, *History of the Indian Mutiny of 1857-58* (1888).

KEAY, F. E., *Indian Education in Ancient and Later Times* (1938).

KEITH, A. B., *A Constitutional History of India* (1936).

KELKAR, N. C., *Life and Times of Lokamanya Tilak* (1928).

KELLOCK, JAMES, *Mahadev Govind Ranade* (1926).

KETKAR, S. V., *History of Caste in India*, Vol. I (1909).

KHUDA BUKHSH, S., *Essays, Indian and Islamic* (1927).

KNOWLES, L. C. A., *Economic Development of the British Overseas Empire* (1924).

KOHN, HANS, *A History of Nationality in the East* (1929).

KRAEMER, H., *Islam in India To-day, 'Moslem World'* (April 1931).

KRISHNA, K. B., *The Problem of Minorities* (1939).

KROPOTKIN, *The Great French Revolution* (1927).

LAJPAT RAI, *Young India* (1916).

LANGE, F. A., *The History of Materialism* (1925).

LASKI, H. J., *The Rise of European Liberalism* (1936).

LATIF, DR A., *The Muslim Problem in India* (1939).

LECKY, W. E. H., *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (1878-1904).

LENIN, V. I., *Selected Works* (1936).

LOKANATHAN, P. S., *Industrialization* (1943).

LOVETT, SIR VERNEY, *History of Indian Nationalist Movement* (1920).

LYALL. SIR A., *Life of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava.*, Vol. II (1905).

MCCABE, JOSEPH, *Key To Culture.*

MACARTNEY, C. A., *National States and National Minorities* (1934).

MACDONALD, J. R., *The Awakening of India* (1910).

MALKANI, N. R., *A Report on the Conditions of Harijans in Delhi.*

MANN, H. H., *Land and Labour in a Deccan Village* (1921).

MANSHARDT, CLIFFORD, *The Hindu-Muslim Problem in India* (1936).

MARX, KARL, *On India.*

MARX, KARL and ENGELS, F., *Correspondence* (1934).

MARY, COUNTESS OF MINTO, *India, Minto and Morley* (1934).

MATTHAI, JOHN, *Village Government in British India* (1915).

MAYNARD, SIR JOHN, *The Russian Peasant and Other Studies* (1942).

MAZOOMDAR, P. C., *Life and Teachings of Keshub Chandra Sen* (1887).

MAZUMDAR, A. C., *Indian National Evolution* (1917).

MEHTA, ASHOKA,

1. *India Comes of Age* (1940).
2. *Indian Shipping* (1940).
3. *Bombay Plan, A Criticism* (1945).

WALCHAND, HIRACHAND. *Why Indian Shipping does not Grow* (1940).

WALTER, H. A., *The Ahmadiya Movement* (1918).
WEBB, BEATRICE, *My Apprenticeship* (1938).
WEDDERBURN, WILLIAM, *Allan Octavian Hume* (1913).
WEISBORD, A., *The Conquest of Power* (1938).
WHITEHEAD, BISHOP, *Indian Problems* (1924).
WILSON, S. G., *Modern Movement among Moslems* (1916).
WINTERNITZ, J., *Nationalities in Europe* (1945).
WINTRINGHAM, T., *Mutiny* (1936).
YAJNIK, I. K., *Peasants' Revolts* (1939).
ZACHARIAS, H. C. E., *Renascent India* (1933).
ZIMMERN, A. E., *Nationality and Government* (1919).

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

Imperial Gazetteers of India, Vols. I-IV.
Indian Statistical Abstract (Annual).
Montagu-Chelmsford Report (1918).
Report of the Indian Industrial Commission, 1916-18.
Report of the Sadler Commission, 1917-19.
Report of the Royal Commission on the Public Service (Islington Commission) (1917).
Report of the Rowlett (Sedition) Committee (1918).
Report of the Royal Commission on the Superior Civil Services in India (Lee Commission) (1924).
Report of the Bombay Riots Enquiry Committee (1925).
Report of the Indian Economic Enquiry Committee (1925).
Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture (1928).
Report of the Butler Committee (1929).
Report of the Hartog Commission (1929).
Report of the Indian Statutory Commission (Simon Commission) (1930).
Report of the Franchise Committee (1931).
Report of the Royal Commission on Labour (1931).
Report of the Indian Central Banking Enquiry Committee (1931).
Report of the Joint Committee (1934).
Report of the Foodgrains Policy Committee (Gregory Committee) (1943).
Report of the Land Revenue Commission (Flouds Commission).
Report of the Famine Commission (Final Report) (1945).
The Moral and Material Progress in India (Annual).

INDEX

Agarkar, 142, 206, 320, 334
agrarian labourer, 64
agrarian population in India, causes of class differentiation in, 64, causes of class differentiation in different provinces, 64, 65, 70; hierarchy among, 65; poverty of, 51-61, 64, 71
agrarian serfdom, 62-64
agrarian tenants, 175, 185-186
Agriculture, Indian, and planning, 74; colonial character of, 69-74; deterioration of, 52-55; during British rule, 51, 69; effects of British land revenue system on, 56-57; features of zemindari, 67-68; national but not prosperous, 51, 73; over-pressure on, 52-55; problems of, 51, 74-75; reconstruction of, 74-77
Ahmadia Movement, 301-302
Ahmed Khan, Sir Syed, 142, 302, 395-396
Akbar, 18, 23, 166
Aligarh University, 142, 395
All-India Depressed Classes Federation, 265
All-India Harijan Sangh, 265
All-India Independence League, 358
All-India Kisan Sabhas, 100, 193
All-India Spinners' Association, 93, 96, 101, 204
All-India Trade Union Congress, 211-213
All-India Village Industries Association, 97
Ambedkar, Dr. B. R., 198, 252, 265, 268, 424-425
Anglicists, 145-146
Arya Samaj, the, 136, 137, 142, 282, 290-292
Ashoka, 23, 166
Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam, 296, 402

Bana, 23
Bannerji, Surendra Nath, 198, 206, 225, 237, 296, 320, 326
banking in India, domination of British capital over, 114, 115 important institutions, 115
Benares Hindu University, 142
Besant, Annie, 294, 325, 362
Bhagat Singh, 361
Bhoj, 23
Bombay Plan, 122, 123; capitalist objectives of, 123; its chief defects, 122, 123
Bose, Subhas Chandra, 354, 360, 367, 377, 378
Brahmo-Samaj, 142, 287-290; and the Western Liberal Culture, 288; as the first organised expression of national awakening, 286, 290; founded in 1828, 287; its national significance, 289; its religious tenets, 288; its socio-reform programme, 288; leaders of, 287-290
British capital investment in India, 115-116
British conquest of India, its consequences on the social classes of India, 33-34; its double role, 34-35; its economic consequence, 34-35; its effect on economy and social anatomy of India, 34-35; its specific features, 33, 34
British policy in India, 398, 400
British rule in India, and feudal states, 312-313; changed policy after 1857, 312-313; class rule of British capitalism, 307; consequences of the new policy after 1857, 312-313; increasing dis-

content before 1885, 314-318; its effect on the people, 307-308; its impact on agriculture, 70-72; its incidence on different classes, 307, 308; its policy before 1857, 312

Calcutta Corporation Act, 335
capitalist class in India, 178-179, 200-206; and Gandhi's doctrines, 204-205; and mass nationalist movements, 205; and national movement, 202; and zemindars, 205; increasingly becoming unprogressive, 217-218; its attitude towards agrarian reforms, 205; its composition, 200-201; its economic position in society, 200-201; its financial support to Gandhian programmes, 204; its grip over the life of the people, 205; its growing monopolistic organisational form, 205; its non-revolutionary and compromising social position, 203-205; its principal organisations, 200-201; its peculiar leadership of Indian nationalism, 202-204; main grievances of the commercial section of, 200-202; programmes of struggles adopted by, 203-204; caste system in India, 19; and British Government, 256, 257; and national freedom, 255 and the movements of the lower classes, 258, 259; and the wealthy classes, 256, 257; as an obstacle to the development of national economy and consciousness, 252, 253; birth as the determinant in, 243, 244; breakdown of its economic foundations, 247, 248; different forms of attack on, 253-255; endogamy—the chief pillar of, 261; effects of different forces in undermining, 260; greatest obstacle to all social reforms, 254; hierarchical gradations in, 245, 246; impact of national movement on, 260; impact of world events on, 260, 261; in pre-British period, 13; its contrast with modern classes, 244-246; its criticism by various organisations, 254, 255; its description, 246, 247; its fate after the disappearance of endogamy, 248, 249; its foundations, 247; its hold over the individual life of a Hindu, 244-246; its treatment of the lower strata of society, 244-246; its undemocratic and authoritarian nature, 244-246; its unique features, 246, 247; principal features of, 246; twofold nature of movements of the lower classes against, 258, 259; used as a force against class struggle, 257, 258; various factors that caused the decline of, 247-255; various movements against, 253-256
child marriage, struggles and measures against, 276
Chiplunkar, 142, 320, 334
Civil Disobedience Movement, 191, 363-369; consequences of the failure of, 367-368
commercialisation of agriculture, 43-45; its effects on peasantry, 58; its significance in building national economy, 43-45
Communal Award, 366, 410
communal electorate, the real object in introducing, 399-401
communal representation, 398-400
communal troubles, 355-356; double causes of, 406-407
communalism in India, and British strategy of counterpoise, 392-393; and capitalism, 428-429; and struggles for seats and jobs, 407; correct strategy to combat, 407; forces that can counteract genetic causes of its development, 407; Krishna classifies the various struggles which take the form of, 408-409; Muslim, various

reasons for its emergence, 392; Rajendra Prasad on the causes of the growth of, 420; struggles which assume the form of, 408-409

complete independence, Lahore resolution on, 362-363; Madras resolution on, 358

Compulsory Education Acts, 151

communities, classes and interests, criticism of the principles underlying, 399-400; motives of British rulers in introducing the principle of, 398-400

concessions, a strategy of British Imperialism, 400-401; their decisive role in splitting the Indian people, 401

Congress Governments, 374-375; causes of their failure to win over Muslim masses, 410-411; criticism of their actions, 375-376

Counterpoise, a critique of the policy of, 400-401; evolution of the British policy of, 397-400

Dadabhai Naoroji, 198, 224, 237, 320, 326, 336

Das, C. R., 198, 211, 228, 345, 350, 351

Dayanand Saraswati, 255, 290

Deccan Education Society, the, 148

de-industrialisation of India, 53, 111

Delhi Manifesto, 361

democratic awakening, basic programmes reflecting the, 276-277; fundamental principles underlying the, 277; its various aspects, 240

devadasis, 276

Dominion Status, and complete independence, 358-363

East India Company, 31, 39, 57, 79-85

education in pre-British India, its basic features, 137-138; its religious character, 137-138

education, mass, 155-156, 164

—modern, and Curzon, 147-148; and the East India Company, and Indian Nationalism, 158-159; and Karve, 142; and makers of modern India, 162-163; and Ram Mohan Roy, 142; and the rise of nationalist leaders, 157; as a gateway to world culture, 157; basic defects of, 151-156; British Government's measures to regulate the contents of, 157; causes of first unhealthy reaction of, 143-145; causes of its limited growth, 164; chief landmarks in the growth of, 145-153; contradictory role of, 157; controversies over the systems of, 145-147; downward filtration theory of, 147; essential core of, 143; its extent during the British rule, 151, 152; its social significance, 135-136; motives of British Government in introducing the, 139-141; progressive content of, 157; prominent persons and organisations which tried to spread, 141-142; secular character of, 157; statistics of the growth of, 151-152; three agencies which spread the, 139-143; Vidya Mandir scheme of, 153, 156; Wood's dispatch on, 147-149

education, primary, statistics of, 151-152

educational experiments, by nationalist leaders, 152, 155; causes of their failure, 155-156

educated middle class, its growth in India, 196-199; its organisations and problems, 196-199; its role in the national movements, 196-199

Election Manifesto of Congress, 361-362

Eleven Points of Gandhi, 363

English language, 159-164

European feudalism, its characteristics, 37

Extremists, 328-330; basic criticism

of the, 332-333; four basic slogans of the, 336; ideology and methods of struggle of, 328-330; important personalities, 328; most important activities of, 334-335; their contribution to the national movement, 328-330; their differences with the liberals, 329-330; their social following, 327-328

famines, their effects on the peasantry, 58
finance capital in India, controllers of the, 112-114
Forest Laws, 46, 59
Forward Block, formation of, 378
Fourteen points of Jinnah, 409-410
Fundamental Rights, resolution on, 365

Gandhi, Mahatma, 96, 97, 146, 155, 156, 187, 191, 198, 204, 205, 227, 237, 266, 267, 283, 295, 296, 297, 345, 353, 357, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 375, 377
Gandhi-Irwin Pact, 365-366
Ghadr Movement, 342
Ghosh, Aurobindo, 150, 198, 224, 285, 295, 296, 327, 332, 341, 396
Ghosh, Rashbehari, 341
Ghokhale, G. K., 142, 148, 163, 198, 226, 266, 296, 320

Hardayal, Lala, 341, 342
Hijrat Movement, 403-404
Hindu Mahasabha, 356, 423-424
Home Rule Movement, 338
Hume, Sir A. C., 318, 319

Ilbert Bill, 316-317
indebtedness of the peasants, 60-62; and the rise of serfdom, 62-64; failure of Government to solve the problem, 61-63; its causes, 58-59; its effects, 60-62; its volume and extent, 60-61; the false causes given for its rise, 63-64
Independence Day, 362
Indian feudalism, its striking features in pre-British India, 37-38
Indian National Congress, 96, 105, 118, 133, 188, 189, 193, 197, 224, 226, 228, 237, 252, 278, 298, 314, 315, 318, 320, 354, 358, 359, 360, 363, 365, 367, 372, 373, 374, 377, 388, 395, 400, 405, 406, 409, 410, 411, 414, 417, 421
Indian Universities Act of 1904, 150
Indianisation of Services, 158
Industrial development in India, absence of heavy industries, 116-117: Buchanan on the possibilities of, 120-121; colonial character of the, 116-117; during World War II, 110; its lop-sided nature, 116-117; Beauchamp on the main handicaps on, 202-203; rise of trusts, 112-113; role of heavy industries in, 102, 118; role of managing agency system in, 114-115
industrialisation of India, revolutionary significance, 122-123
industries, modern Indian, absence of heavy, 107; and Imperial Preference, 108, 109, 110; and policy of discriminatory protection, 110; and rise of new social classes, 102, 103; basic factors responsible for the rise of, 103; chief trusts which control the, 111, 112; few persons who control the, 111, 112; control of finance capital over, 112, 113; history of the expansion of, 102-110; important characteristics of the development of, 111; Loknathan on, 106-107; main obstacles to the development of, 105, 106, 115, 116, 119, 120; their significant role in national economy, 102
intelligentsia in India, role of, 162-163, 179-180, 196-199
Iqbal, Sir Mahmud, 303-304, 409, 415

Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, 344-346
Jamait-ul-Ulema, 403
Jinnah, M., 339, 362, 409, 410, 415, 416, 423
Joshi, N. M., 211

Kabir, 21, 263
Kalidas, 23
Karve, 142, 152
Khilafat Movement, 346, 403
Kisan Sabhas, their growth and development; 190-193
kisans Indian and Congress policy, 193-194; causes of the specific psychological traits of, 194-196; history of their struggles, 188-194; independent class organisations of, 190-192
Krishnavarma, Shyamji, 340
Kutub Minar, 15

Lahore Conspiracy Case, 361
Lajpat Rai, Lala, 142, 198, 199, 211, 225, 296, 297, 327, 329, 330, 333, 336, 350, 396
land labourers, their position, 64-67; their strength, 64-67
landlordism, absence, 61-62, 65-66; its political role, 39-40; three reasons for its reaction, 39; unprogressive and unproductive character of, 67-69
land revenue, its tendency to increase, 56-58
land settlements, new, effects on village economy and social life, 40-41; far reaching consequences, 37-43; main features, 38-39
landlords, their composition, 67-68; their role in agrarian production, 67-68; their political role, 39, 61, 62
Liberal Federation, 339
Liberalism, and pioneers of Indian nationalism, 299; cornerstone of western, 146; its contrast with medievalism, 284-285; its principles, 298-299
liberals, 118, 321, 322, 323, 324, 326, 328, 339; outstanding personalities among the, 197-198, 320
Lucknow Pact of, 338, 402

Macaulay, Lord, 137, 140, 145
Mahomed Ali, Maulana, 346, 402, 404
Malaviya, Madan Mohan, 142, 320, 402
managing agency system, its features in India, 114-115
materialist philosophy, groups adhering to the, 295-297, 298-299; reasons why the national leaders did not evolve, 296-297
Meerut Conspiracy Case, 213, 228. 357, 360
Mehta, Sir Pherojshah, 198, 226, 227, 237, 320
merchants, their position in pre-British and British periods, 177-178
minorities in India, capitalism and, 428-429; characteristics of the important, 390-392; distinguishing features, 390-392; significance of, 382-383; socialism and the solution of the problem, 429-430; where they differ from nationalities, 383-384, 390
Mohani, Maulana Hazrat, 351, 404, 405
Moneylender, the, his role in village economy during British rule, 61, 176-177
monopolies in India, in contrast to those of advanced countries, 118-120
Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, 343-344
Mopla Rebellion, the 190, 350
Muslim League, the, 333, 338, 343, 354, 356, 391, 397, 398, 402, 403, 404, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 415, 417, 418, 420, 422, 425, 427, 436
Muslim political organisations, their leaders, programmes and activities, 413-414
Muslims, Indian, outstanding lea-

ders after 1912, 402; political movements and developments among, 402-403; their development during 1857 and 1905, 392-397

Nanak, 21
nation, 26; a dominant form of community existence, 25; and capitalism, 26, 27, 29; attributes of a, 26, 27; Carr on the characteristics of a, 1, 2; definition of a, 383; distinguished from a national minority, 383-384; its characteristics, 1
national awakening, reasons for slow development among the Muslims, 299-301
– consciousness, comparison with feudal consciousness, 5, 6; factors generating, 18-20
— culture, content of, 26; factors giving rise to, 25-26; pre-requisites of, 25-26
nationalism, a product of certain socio-historical conditions, 2, 3; Carr on its recent growth, 1; its growth in England, 2
— Indian, 4, 5; a modern phenomenon, 4; a product of numerous forces, 432; an uneven process, 387; fundamental tasks of the rising, 281; its genetic causes, 158-159; its peculiar growth, 296-297; its three basic peculiarities, 384-386; its various striking features, 5, 6; pioneers of, 300
nationalist movement in India, causes giving rise to fourth phase of, 436-437; characteristics of the fourth phase of, 436-437; factors which gave rise to the third phase of, 435; fifth phase of, 438-439; first phase of, 433; fourth phase of, 436-437; gains during fourth phase, 436-437; ideology and leaders of the third phase of, 435; its multi-class basis with diverse objectives, 436; leadership in the fourth phase of, 437; leadership in the second phase of, 433; reactionary developments during fourth phase of, 437; second phase of, 433-434; threefold peculiarities of, 434; third phase of, 435-436; various developments during fifth phase of, 438-439; various phases of the development of, 441
Nationalist Muslim Party, 410
nationalities in India, capitalism and the solution of the problem of, 427-429; factors which caused their awakening, 386-387; Indian National Congress and the problem of, 388; its significance, 382; pre-requisites for the solution of, 427-429; social background of, 427; their aspirations, 387-388; two tendencies at work in the growing movements of, 389-390
nationalities and minorities, the problem of, a critical problem, 427; a peculiar historical product, 383; basic pre-requisites for an effective solution of, 428-429; how did the problem arise, 382-385
nations, evolution of modern, 5, 6; obstacle to the emergence of, 5; product of capitalist development of society, 381-383; Stalin on the historical character of the modern, 382-383; their emergence, a prolonged historical process, 1-6
Nava Ratna, 23
Nehru, Jawaharlal, 186, 192, 193, 198, 237, 332, 350, 356, 358, 359, 362, 365, 372, 376, 406, 421
Nehru, Motilal, 191, 198, 227, 332, 350, 352, 353, 358, 359, 362
Nehru, Report, 359, 409, 410
new agrarian relations, characteristics of, 40-49; handicaps on the, 49
newspapers and periodicals in India, classification according to

their politics, 229-230; their origin and development, 223-229; various categories of, 226-229
News Services in India, 233-235
Non-Co-operation Movement in India, 349-354

Orientalists, 146
Ottawa Agreements, 109
Pakistan, Ambedkar's views on, 424-425; basic idea underlying the demand of, 415-416; Communist Party of India on, 425-426; Congress Socialist Party on, 422; Hindu Mahasabha on, 423-424; history of the idea of, 415-417; ideology behind the demand of, 411-412; Indian Liberals on the scheme of, 422-423; Indian National Congress on, 417-421; Jawaharlal's arguments against, 421; Jinnah's arguments for, 416; Rajendra Prasad's views on, 420; Resolution on, 412-413; two-nation theory, underlying the demand of, 412; various schemes of, 417
Pal, Bepin Chandra, 150, 158, 184, 198, 225, 285, 295, 296, 297, 328, 332, 333, 396, 417
Partition of Bengal, 335, 336, 397
peasant proprietors in India, growth of national consciousness among, 186-187; increased impoverishment of, 186-187; process of differentiation among, 186-187; rise of, 175, 177, 185; their classification, 187
planned economy for India, and capitalism, 122-124; its essential features, 120-121; objectives of real, 123; pre-requisites for a real, 120-121
Political-administrative unification of India, defects of, 170-171; factors which led to, 167-169; its undemocratic essence, 170-171; its effects, 46-47; movements to reform the basis, 171-172; under British rule, 128
Political movements in India, organisations before 1857, 309-310; the new leadership after 1857, 317-318
Poona Pact, 367
Prarthana Samaj Movement, 290
pre-British India, artisan industry in, 11-12; culture in, 17-24; lack of national consciousness in, 19-21; social institutions in, 11-13, 15; urban economy in, 14-17; village economy in, 9-13, 37-38
Press in India, and national leaders, 223-226; and the vested interests, 238; as a factor in building national consciousness, 221-222; 236-237; factors retarding the growth of a free, 237-238; history of its growth, 223-226; its extent, 229-230; its importance, 221-222; causes of the slow rate of growth of, 230-231; its varied role, 221, 222, 236; national significance of the, 236, 237
Press Acts in India, history of, 231-232; their effects, 232
Princes, Indian, their role during British period, 182-183
private property in land, significance of its introduction in India, 38-40
Professional class in India and Indian nationalism, 200-202; its composition, 176-177; its demands, 196-198; its organisation, 196-199; its social and political role, 196-200
Purshottamdas Thakurdas, Sir, 113

Ramakrishna Mission Movement, 293-294
Ranade, 104, 163, 198, 255, 276, 281, 290, 320
rationalist and materialist ideas, reasons for their slow growth in India, 295-297
religious-communal movements, as tools of vested interests, 305; rea-

sons for their growth in twentieth century, 305

religious-reform movement in Europe, 286-287; in India and Indian nationalism, 295; religious revival movements, 285-286; among Muslims, 301-305; chief characteristics, 282-284; contents of, 281-282; contradictory role in national life, 305; national in content, 285-286; outstanding individuals of, 295; progressive character of early, 283; some minor, 294; their social content, 286-287; two principles underlying, 281-282

Revolt of 1857, 309-312

Round Table Conferences, 361, 365

Rowlatt Bills and Acts, 344

Roy, M. N., 228

Roy, Raja Ram Mohan, 142, 146, 223, 231, 236, 251, 254, 275, 281, 287, 288, 296

Savarkar, V. D., 266, 340, 423, 424

self-sufficient village economy and national consciousness, 48-50; and rise of nationalism, 99-100; causes of its disruption, 41-47; historical significance of its disruption, 48-50

Shankerseth, Jagannath, 147, 320

Shaukat Ali, Maulana, 346, 350

Simon Commission, 357, 409

social classes in India, causes of the rise of new, 174, 176; contrast of the new with the old, 214-215; enumeration of new, 175-176; history of the rise of new, 176-180; national character of the new, 214-215; non-national character of the old, 214-215; specific characteristics of the new, 214-217; two-fold movements carried on by the new, 218; uneven process of their development, 174-175; varying degree of progressive nature of the new, 217-218

social reform movements among Muslims, 301-305; an expression of national awakening, 240-242

Socialist movement in India, 356-357

state monopolies in India, their peculiarities, 118-120

sub-division and fragmentation of land, causes of, 52-53; its effects, 55-56; its extent, 52-55

sub-infeudation, 68

Swadeshi movement, 105, 121

Swaraj Party, the, 354-355

Tagore, Rabindranath, 152, 296, 335

tenants, their demands and struggles, 185-186; their organisation, 186; their problems, 185-186; their rise and growth, 186-188

terrorist movements in India, 339-342

Theosophy, 294

Tilak, B. G., 142, 148, 198, 199, 206, 210, 225, 226, 237, 296, 327, 329, 331, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 344, 345, 396, 417

town handicrafts in India, causes of their decline, 79-87; effects of their decline, 86-88; history of their decline, 79-86; progressive significance of their decline, 90-91; their present position, 85

transport, modern means of, and consolidation of nations, 126-128; and rise of nationalism, 131-133

— system in India, chief reasons for introducing the modern, 126-127; colonial and lop-sided development of modern, 129-130; in the British period, 128-129; its significance in national economy, 128, 129, 132, 133; progressive role played by the modern, 131-133

trusts, some important in India, 112-113

two-nation theory, and Congress Socialist Party, 422; and Indian Liberals, 422-423; and Indian National Congress, 417-421; Gandhi on, 418-419; Jinnah's exposition of, 416; Rajendra Prasad on, 420

uneconomic holdings in India, extent of, 53-54; untouchability, an obstacle to national unity, 266; and various religious and social reform movements, 265-266; basic pre-requisites for its total abolition, 271; British attitude towards, 268-269; ineffective struggle in the past against, 263; its basic occupational foundations, 270-272, limited effectiveness of pure social reform movements to eradicate, 272; objective factors attempting to weaken, 269-271; various movements to eradicate, 265-267

untouchables, Ambedkar on British attitude towards, 268; and the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh, 267; and the British Government, 268; awakening among them, a part of national awakening, 269-270; literacy among, 267; peculiar nature of the oppression suffered by, 263-264; religious sanction to the oppression of, 264; social gradations among, 264; tasks assigned by Hindu society to, 263-264; their disabilities, 263-265; their numerical strength, 264; their Satyagraha Movements, 267; two-fold evils under which they suffer, 271; various movements and organisations, 265-267

Vallabhacharya, 21

Vedas, 136, 138

Vikramaditya, 23

village artisan industries in India, and Gandhi, 95-98; causes of the failure to revive them, 97-98; causes of their decline, 93-94; national and progressive significance of their decline, 99-101; story of their decline, 93-95; vain efforts to resuscitate them, 96-97

Vivekanand, Swami, 284, 293, 295, 328

Wahabi Movement, the, 315, 393

widow-remarriage, struggles and legislation for, 276

women in India, and child marriage, 275-276; and custom of infanticide, 275; education, 277-278; and institution of suttee, 275; conditions during British rule, 274; effects of education on Purdah, 275; her position in pre-British period, 273-274; institution of temple prostitution, 276; mass awakening among lower strata of, 279; social reform movements and, 275-276; struggles for the emancipation of, 275-276; their awakening, 279; their outstanding organisations, 277-278; their participation in politics, 278-279; their participation in trade-union and kisan movements, 279

working class, composition of modern, 206-208; conditions of life and labour of, 207-208; defective legislation for, 207-208; development of their organisations, 209-213; factors retarding the self-organisations of, 208-209; genesis of modern, 206-207; growth of the organised economic and political movements of, 210-214; its peculiar status in society, 208-209; its psychological traits, 208-209

workers' and peasants' parties, 212-213, 357

Zemindari, its extent, 40

Zemindars, factors which gave rise to, 174, 176, 177; their anti-national political role, 184-185; their opposition to social reform, 185; their principal organisations, 183-184; their unproductive economic role, 185

~~587 - 2/9/96~~
587. 2/946

[illegible]d M.P.P. Rause
No.
Price Rs. 50/- 0038
National Law School of
India University Library
Central College Camp
Bangalore-560 001

NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL OF INDIA
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
NAGARABHAVI, BANGALORE - 560 072.
This book must be returned by the date stamped below

~~23/8/10 1756~~

1946

~~27/12/12~~

~~24/3/16 2189~~

P.T.O.

NLS
00038

320.54
Cl No. DES
Author DESAI

320.54
DES

0038